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**THE BEQUEST OF
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ANNIE GRAYSON;
OR,
LIFE IN WASHINGTON.

BY

MRS. N. P. LASSELLE.

"The scenes portrayed are not fancy sketches, but a Picture of Life in Washington; the truthfulness of which will be readily recognized by those familiar with the Society at the National Metropolis."

New York:
HUNCE & BROTHER, PUBLISHERS,
124 NASSAU STREET.
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BUNCE & BROTHER, PUBLISHERS,

134 NASSAU STREET, N. Y.

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TO

Mrs. Christiana Budge,

A LADY EMINENT FOR PIETY, INTELLIGENCE, AND EVERY VIRTUE THAT ELEVATES

AND BEAUTIFIES THE FEMALE CHARACTER,

THIS BOOK

IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED,

BY THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

When we commenced putting together the incidents narrated in the following pages, we did not dream of making a book.

The scenes portrayed, are not fancy sketches, but pictures drawn from life; the truthfulness of which, persons, familiar with Washington Society, will at once recognize.

In portraying them, we have endeavored to impress upon the young mind, the danger of giving the heart up to a love of pleasure and outward display. And if the perusal of this book, shall lead any to a true appreciation of, and the practice of early piety, it will have accomplished the object for which it was written.

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ANNIE GRAYSON:

OR,

LIFE IN WASHINGTON.

CHAPTER I

DISTRIBUTION OF PREMIUMS.

"ANGELIC! beautiful! surpassingly beautiful!" was the exclamation that fell from many lips.

And it was indeed a tableau of rare beauty that called forth these exclamations.

The room, in which the distribution of premiums to the pupils of the Academy of Visitation, in Georgetown, annually takes place, was filled to overflowing with visitors, pupils and teachers. The President and his lady were among the distinguished visitors present. Several young ladies had received premiums from the hands of the President, when upon his calling the name of ANNIE GRAYSON, a fairy child of about five summers presented herself and threw herself at his feet in a position of such infantile grace, which, united with her surpassing beauty, caused the above named exclamation to drop involuntarily from the lips of every beholder.

She was dressed in a slip of pure white muslin, the loose sleeves looped up with ornaments of pearl, exposing an arm and hand so exquisitely formed, that even the refined and fastidious taste of a Powers might be content with them as a model. Her soft silken hair hung in ringlets, falling upon, without concealing, a neck and shoulders white as Parian

marble, and formed in nature's perfect mould. As she sank gracefully on one knee, clasped her tiny hands across her breast, and inclined her head slightly forward, methought I had never looked on aught on earth so beautiful. And when the President took, from the stand upon which the premiums were deposited, a wreath of pure white roses, and placed them on her fair young brow saying :

"This is awarded to Annie Grayson for her extraordinary attainments in vocal music," I could almost fancy the wreath of flowers a halo of glory, typical of the purity and innocence of the fair being, whose brow it encircled. When she rose from her kneeling position, she stepped back a few paces, and raising her eyes towards Heaven, she sang, in a voice that vibrated on the ear, soft and sweet as wind-harps, when breathed on by Eolus' gentlest breath, the following song, which had been composed and arranged to music, expressly for her, by one of the sisters :

Our Father, I thank thee,
Because thou hast given,
To me, thy own creature,
A gift meet for Heaven.

Permit Saint Cecilia
My patron to be,
Like her I would yield,
Perfect homage to thee.

Let sin never sully
This young heart of mine ;
Impress on its tablet,
Thy precepts divine.

My heart's adoration
I'll pour forth in song,
Until thou shalt call me,
To join that bright throng
Of angels who ever,
Are found near thy throne ;
Singing strains of sweet music,
To mortals unknown.

Even now, my rapt vision,
Beholds the bright band ;
And I hear the soft music,
Of that blessed land.

Whilst singing, she seemed forgetful of the crowd around her. She seemed as if she were in the actual presence of God, and the gushing melody which flowed from her lips, filling the room, and thrilling every heart with rapture, was of such unearthly beauty, that, I was ready to believe, angel minstrels had, by some mysterious communication with her spirit, taught her these tones so seemingly soft and low, yet distinctly heard, to the most distant corner of the room. Often, long years after this event, would the memory of this scene wake an echo in my heart like a strain of sweet music. However, it is not of myself I would speak, but let us follow the fortunes of this fair child.

She was the only child of wealthy parents. Her mother was a gay woman of fashion whose greatest ambition was, to create a sensation in society, by the elegance of her dress, the splendor of her parties, and the dashing style of her equipage. Her father was a man of superior intellect, and sober common sense views of life. He had been so entirely captivated by the rare personal beauty of her mother, that, he did not discover her only enjoyment was derived from gay society, until she had become his wife. She was endowed by nature with a fine mind, and had she received proper training, and moral culture when young, she would have become something infinitely superior to a brilliant woman of society.

But the praises of injudicious friends, and the gratification of every wish, fostered a spirit of vanity and self-indulgence, which took such possession of her bosom, that the better feelings of her nature were almost destroyed. She married George Grayson, because he was the most distinguished gentleman of her acquaintance, not because she appreciated those noble qualities which he possessed, and which were calculated to inspire, with the deepest and purest love, the heart of a noble-souled woman. When the gayety, which succeeded the marriage of the talented lawyer, and the admired belle, had somewhat subsided, and they were permitted to spend one evening in the quiet of their own drawing-room, uninterrupted by visitors, Judge Grayson, for he had even then been appointed to that responsible office, laid his

hand caressingly on the glossy curls of his fair young wife, saying—

“Now, darling Annie, I trust we may be permitted the quiet enjoyment of each other's society, and taste the joys of domestic life. I have lived a bachelor so long, that my heart yearns the more earnestly for the pure happiness, which is only found at the domestic hearth.”

“Why, Charles,” said the spoiled beauty, “you don't suppose I am going to settle down into an old woman, at once, because I married a man ten years older than myself.”

“Certainly not, my love; but after so much gayety, the quiet of home is necessary for the restoration of both the mental and physical faculties to a healthful tone; such constant and unnatural excitement is injurious to both mind and body.”

“Domestic happiness! quiet of home! Why, my dear, these are old phrases—obsolete in this age of progress and refinement. As for me, I think life scarcely worth possessing were it not for the pleasures of society.”

Judge Grayson made no reply, but mentally exclaimed,—

“Ah, I fear I have made a mistake, and my bright dreams of domestic bliss will not be realized.”

Ere six months had passed away he was convinced that it was too true, that the only enjoyment of his wife was derived from society. When he fully understood her character, instead of remonstrating with her on the weakness and folly of her opinions and pursuits, he resolved, like a sensible man as he was, to place at her disposal the means of gratifying all her wishes and tastes, whilst he turned his attention to politics, determined to find in gratified ambition a solace for the disappointments of his anticipations of conjugal felicity. His success in obtaining political honors exceeded his most sanguine expectations; and at the time we present his daughter to our readers, he was an honored representative in congress, and so faithfully did he perform his duty, that, after the expiration of a second term of his service as congressman, the legislature of his native state elected him to the United States Senate.

When Miss Grayson became a mother, her husband fondly

hoped it would effect a change in her character ; but in this he was disappointed. It seemed that flattery and love of display, had deadened in her bosom that holiest and purest emotion of woman's heart, maternal love. True, when little Annie was about four years old, and was remarkable for beauty and intelligence, the mother's vanity was gratified, and she then had her beautifully dressed and presented to the distinguished visitors who were attracted to the house by the elegance of her entertainments and the distinguished position occupied by her husband. The expressions of admiration which the beauty of the child called forth, was music to her ears, but not so to the father : he feared it might have a hurtful influence upon the heart of his child ; and to avoid this danger, he resolved to have her educated at the Academy of Visitation, in Georgetown. She had been about six months at this institution at the time of which I speak, and the character of the instruction she there received, may be inferred from the song that was sung by her on the day of the distribution of premiums.

Her extraordinary personal beauty and mental endowments was such that her teachers, with every precaution, could not prevent such remarks as the following from meeting her ear.

"She is beautiful as a picture !"

"She sings like an angel !"

"She is the most gifted child I ever saw !"

The pious Sisters, to prevent feelings of pride and vanity from arising in her heart, taught her to feel grateful to her Heavenly Father for the gifts He had lavished on her.

She was the idol of her father's heart, and her presence was like a sunbeam in the household, yet he kept her most of the time with the Sisters, that their teaching and example might be so deeply impressed upon her mind, that no intercourse with the heartless and gay could efface it. When she was about ten years of age, her father purchased an elegant mansion in Washington, over which his beautiful wife presided with grace and dignity. They generally remained in the city nine months out of twelve, and Annie usually spent three months at home during the year. At these times she frequently annoyed her high-bred

mother very much by what the mother termed her ignorance of propriety and a want of self-appreciation. One day she was telling a lady friend, in Annie's presence, of her strange tastes. "Why," said she, "would you believe it, the child would just as soon take for a friend the daughter of some poor, obscure individual, as the daughter of the President? She is never better pleased than when spending a day with my washer-woman."

"I would not tolerate such low associations," replied Mrs. Parkinson.

"Mrs. Stanmore is refined and lady-like in manner; and although she is under the necessity of laboring with her hands to support her family, there is nothing common or low in her mind or manners. Annie seems so fond of her, that I cannot refuse her the pleasure of spending a day with her occasionally; yet still, I would be pleased if her taste was different."

"But, mamma," said Annie, putting her arm around her mother's neck, "you know Ella Stanmore is such a sweet little girl I cannot help loving her dearly, and Edwin is so kind—he tells us stories, and makes us boats, and hauls us on his wagon, and then, when we are tired of playing, he teaches Ella her lesson. I wish I had a brother like Edwin. And then Mrs. Stanmore prepares us such nice dinners! When it is ready, we all sit at table so nicely: Mrs. Stanmore sits at the head of the table, Edwin at the foot, Ella at one side, and I at the other. Oh, I think poor people are so happy! they have no servants to vex them and make them scold like rich people do."

"Don't you think Mrs. Stanmore would be happier if she were rich enough to send Ella and Edwin to school? Every mother is anxious for the education of her children."

"Oh, no, mamma, she wouldn't send them to school; she teaches them herself; and she says it is so much pleasure to hear them say their lessons. Edwin never went to school a day in his life, and he reads French beautifully, and he is just commencing Spanish."

"And does his mother teach him?" asked Mrs. Parkinson.

"Certainly," replied Annis.

"But how does she find time?"

"Oh, she teaches them of evenings when the day's work is done."

"It seems to me," said she, addressing Mrs. Grayson, "you have a very accomplished washerwoman—one who is capable of teaching her children Spanish and French."

"Why, Mrs. Stanmore was, at the time of her marriage, very wealthy, but her husband was extravagant, and fond of high living. He became intemperate, and, in time, dissipated all his property. He was an old friend of Judge Grayson, who used his influence, and procured him a situation in one of the departments with a salary barely sufficient to support his family. When he had been in office about six months he died, leaving his wife and two small children here in a strange city, without any means of support. She had barely money enough to defray the funeral expenses. The day after the funeral, my husband called upon her, and offered to transact any business for her, telling her if she needed any money, just to draw on him. She thanked him for his kindness, and said she would accept of his offer to arrange her business, but as to accepting money, that she could not do.

"'You know, Judge,' said she, 'I belong to one of the proudest families of our State, I can work for my children, but cannot receive charity. If your wife will give me employment, I can support my family. That will be a favor, for it will prevent me from being obliged to seek work, which I otherwise would have to do.'

"In a few days, she disposed of her furniture, moved into a small house, and entered upon her hard task. When she called upon me a few days after for work, I gave her some sewing, she took it, and told me, if I put my muslins, laces, &c., out of the house to have them washed, she would like to do it for me, as it was more profitable than sewing. Thus she, who was reared in luxury, became my washerwoman.

"There are many strange histories in the city of Washington, could we have them all revealed to us.

"The way Annie became so much attached to her was this:

about a year after the death of her husband, Annie had a severe attack of illness, her life was despaired of, and I believe we were more indebted to the kind and careful nursing of Mrs. Stanmore for its preservation, than to the physician. She lay several days unconscious of existence. During that time, Mrs. Stanmore never left her, and when a change for the better took place, she recovered very slowly, and Mrs. Stanmore remained with her, soothing her when restless with fever and weakness, by some strain of music, or an interesting story. Since that time, Annie has been devoted to her, and as she is refined and amiable, I permit the child to visit her frequently."

"Well, were she my daughter, I would not let her visit them."

"Why not?"

"Impressions might be made that you will, when it is too late, regret."

"I do not fear that."

"Well, I am really glad I never had any children, for I should always be in an agony about them, for fear they would form associations unworthy of themselves."

But I suppose our readers would like to know who Mrs. Parkinson is.

Well, she is the wife of a gentleman of wealth, who has his country seat, and town house. She is now one of the leaders of ton, but she did not always occupy this position. She had previous to her marriage been a servant. Her beauty captivated a rich old widower, who made her his wife, but his friends refused to recognize her as an equal. This mortified her pride; she was ambitious as well as beautiful, and she determined to leave no means untried to gain an entrance into a circle above the former friends of her husband. She was shrewd and keen-sighted, and she had, in the situation of servant, studied human nature thoroughly.

She knew that wealth, with perseverance and well timed flattery, would in time open the doors of the most aristocratic. She went to work determined to succeed, and she did succeed. We see her on terms of intimacy with Mrs. Grayson, one of the most aristocratic ladies of the Union. To be invited to her

house is a passport to the most exclusive society. Mrs. Parkinson is introduced to the most distinguished persons of the nation. Her triumph is complete. Senators, Congressmen, and distinguished strangers, partake of her elegant dinners, and praise her husband's superior wines. She presided with as much elegance as if she had always occupied this position, but she is in constant fear that some of her new-made friends may know something of her former history.

Though so amiable and gentle in society, to her dependents and those who work for her she is imperious and tyrannical. And whilst she would expend hundreds to pamper the appetites of fashionable visitors, it was with the greatest reluctance she paid what was justly due to those who labored for her, and she is a true representative of hundreds of this class, as many a poor washerwoman and seamstress can testify. When Mrs. Parkinson had left, Annie said :

"Mamma, I don't like Mrs. Parkinson."

"Why, child?"

"I do not think she has a good heart."

"I am sure she has always treated you kindly."

"Yes, but—"

"But what?"

"I do not believe she would be so kind, if I were poor and needed her kindness."

"What put that notion in your head?"

"I do not know, mamma; it just came of itself."

"You are a queer child; I like Mrs. Parkinson very much."

"Yes, and she likes you, but it is because you live in a fine house, and give parties."

"Now, you are judging uncharitably; you should not do so, it is wicked."

"I am sorry, mamma, but I cannot help my thoughts."

"Then you should not speak them."

"Only to you, mamma."

"Not even to me."

"Well, I will not do so any more; but, indeed, I do not think Mrs. Parkinson has a good heart."

The truthful heart of the child had rightly divined the character of the visitor. It was true, she only loved Mrs. Grayson because she was distinguished and fashionable. And that there is much such love as this in fashionable life, all who observe society can plainly perceive; and in no city is it more apparent than Washington, as we shall have many instances ere we conclude our story.

CHAPTER II.

THE THREE FRIENDS.

"Oh! sister, sister, see what lovely flowers Imogen Delacroix has brought us," was the exclamation of little Lucy Catron, as Imogen entered, bearing in her hand a basket filled with Flora's loveliest children.

"Sister Angelique," said Imogen coaxingly, placing the flowers on the table, and putting her arm around the neck of the nun, and imprinting a kiss upon her fair, calm brow, "do let me decorate the altar of our dear little chapel this morning, that's a dear, good sister."

"Why not let Sister Marguerite attend to it as usual."

"Because I want to arrange the flowers myself. See, here I have brought the blush rose, which represents Annie Grayson, so modest, yet so queenly, and a bunch of oak leaves, which is typical of Emma Carlton, and the white lily, which is the emblem of our lovely, pure-minded Ella Stanmore. Sister, do let me help Sister Marguerite, and I'll pray for you, every evening for a month."

"Well, well, child, go along, and have your way, for you will never cease coaxing till you do."

As soon as permission was given, she bounded gracefully from the room, and as Sister Angelique gazed upon her retreating form, she ejaculated,

"Bright, joyous, happy creature, may thy heart never be less gay than now."

The decoration of the chapel is completed, Imogen surveys it with a satisfied look, and turning to Sister Marguerite, says:

"This is to me a sacred spot, it always disposes my mind to calm and holy thoughts."

It is a bright, quiet Sabbath morn, and as the gentle breath of summer swept over the altar, playing with the fresh flowers, then floating through the chapel and filling it with fragrance, it did truly seem one of earth's calmest, holiest, fairest spots. And the gentle footfall of the pious sisters, as they moved from place to place, putting a finishing touch to its arrangements, reminded one of ministering angels, whose mission on earth, is to do good to suffering mortals; and indeed it is the vocation of these devoted females, to perform deeds of kindness and charity.

But, why is the chapel decorated with such unusual care this morning?

Ah, the sacrament of baptism is to be administered. Three of the pupils have become converts, and after the sacrifice of the holy mass, they are to be baptized, and that is the reason why Imogen Delacroix, who is a perfect little devotee, is kissing so rapturously the three dearest friends of her heart, ANNIE GRAYSON, EMMA CARLTON, and ELLA STANMORE.

But, exclaims the reader, how came Ella Stanmore, whose mother is a washerwoman, to be a pupil at the Academy of Visitation? The daughters of Senators, Congressmen, Commodores, Generals, and the most distinguished persons in the nation, are educated at this institution, and it takes money to enable one to get an education here.

Stop a moment, and we will tell you. One evening about two years previous to the time of which we are speaking, when the labors of the day were done, and Mrs. Stanmore was seated in her small and humbly furnished room, giving the usual evening instruction to her heart's only treasures, Edwin and Ella, a rap was heard at the door. Mrs. Stanmore rose and opened it, when a tall, foreign looking gentleman entered. He bowed to her, saying,

"My name is Belmont, I believe I address Mrs. Stanmore."

"You do," replied the lady. "Will you be seated," continued she, offering him a chair.

He took the proffered seat, and regarding her a moment, he said,

"You have forgotten me, I believe."

"I do not remember having ever seen you," replied she, "I knew a family of that name in Ohio, but you bear no resemblance to them."

"Don't you remember Charles Belmont, who worked for your husband, on his farm as a day laborer four years, and then took charge of, I might almost say, the fleet of flat boats that carried the surplus products of his farm, with that of the whole settlement, to New Orleans, the only market, which, at that time, was accessible to the farmers of the fertile valleys of the West."

"I remember him perfectly."

"I am he."

"Is it possible," said she, advancing and grasping his hand cordially, "that the dark-browed, foreign looking gentleman before me, is my favorite and noble-souled Charlie?"

"If you doubt it, I can give you some more of his history, that will prove his identity. You remember when I returned from New Orleans, having made, what was called an unusually good trip, that is, sold my pork and corn high, and brought home a large amount of money, and your husband gave me a thousand dollars, saying, I had too much enterprise and business tact to remain a mere laborer, that, I should take this, and engage in business for myself, and when I offered to give him my note promising to repay it when I should be successful in business, he replied: 'No, no Charley, when you are successful, which you surely will be, if I, or mine should need it, you can repay it, and should we never need it, which I trust we never shall, you will give it to some industrious worthy young man like yourself.' I have succeeded beyond my wildest dreams, and to you, Mrs. Stanmore, I am indebted for all I have, and all I am. It was the kind instruction given by you, during the long winter evenings, to the ignorant but knowledge-craving farm boy, that enabled me to transact business so successfully for Mr. Stanmore, and was the means of giving me a start in the world.

"When I left Ohio, I went to New Orleans; I remained there about two years, and made money. At the end of that time, I was induced by a Spaniard, with whom I had become acquainted, to go to South America and engage in the mercantile business.

"I went to Rio Janeiro, and since that time, nothing but good fortune has attended me. Every venture in which I engaged brought me gold. For a time, my extraordinary success made me forgetful of every thing, save the acquisition of wealth. At length, I had more than enough to satisfy the desires of the most grasping mind. I had merchant vessels upon the seas, and warehouses upon the wharves, filled with the merchandise and products of every land. I was a welcome and honored guest in the halls of the high-born and wealthy. Bright eyes looked on me approvingly, and sweet strains of music warbled by lovely lips fell on my ear. But, now, a yearning to look again on *la Belle Rivière*, as the early French settlers poetically named the Ohio, rose in my heart. The memory of the humble cabin home that sheltered my early years, came over me, and my mother's low and gentle voice, indicative of suffering and patience, was again murmuring in my ear. Then came the remembrance of your kind teaching of the lowly, ignorant, not orphan—but worse than orphan boy, for my father had been degraded by the use of rum, until his presence, which should have shed joy and gladness on our humble home, brought only dread and fear. Day after day, the desire to visit my childhood's home grew upon me, although but few pleasant associations were connected with it, save those years spent beneath your roof. Did the wealthy and educated know what an influence kind words and encouragement from them exercise upon the lowly, they would not be so rarely given. When I determined to revisit my native land, I soon made arrangements to leave my business in the care of trusty agents, and sailed for New Orleans. After remaining a few days in the city, I proceeded to Cincinnati. From there, I went in a carriage, which I had purchased for that purpose, to my boyhood's home. When I arrived there, I found, of those whom I loved, but my mother, one brother and a sister. Some had been re-

moved by death. Others had sought new homes. My father had been dead many years, and my brother occupied the old home. It was much improved, but still humble. My mother looked happier than I had ever known her. Her joy at seeing me was unbounded, and you may imagine, but cannot know, the joy and pride I felt at being able to render her independent and happy in her old age. My first inquiry, after seeing my relatives, was for you. They told me you had removed to this city. I now, had no lack of friends who vied with each other in paying attention to the rich South American, as I was called. I remained only long enough to purchase a comfortable home for my mother, see her settled in it, and have my sister placed in a school where she would be well educated. I then came immediately to this city. I arrived here this afternoon, and after I had partaken of some refreshment, I called on Judge Grayson to ascertain your residence. From him I learned death had, also, visited your household. Without returning to the hotel, I hastened to find you, and happy will I be, indeed, if I can in any way serve you. And I think it is now time I should repay you the money which was the foundation of my prosperity."

"Yes, Charles, you may repay it, for our circumstances are sadly changed since I saw you: we are now poor, and labor for our support, but I have not murmured."

"You are poor no longer; I will to-morrow deposit ten thousand dollars in bank to your credit, and then my debt to you will not be half repaid."

"Oh, mother, won't that be grand!" exclaimed Edwin; "now Ella can be sent to the Academy of Visitation, and be brought into social intercourse with that society, which is her birth-right."

"Yes, my fine boy; and you shall go to school too."

"Oh, I do not wish to go to school. My mother has instructed me, and I am more advanced than boys of my age who go to school. Besides, I am now learning to be a printer in the office of the National Intelligencer, where I have opportunities of acquiring practical knowledge more useful to me than College lore."

"Spoken like a man ! You will be a congressman some day."

"That is just what I intend to me."

Mr. Belmont remained till a late hour conversing with Mrs. Stanmore, and she perceived his naturally fine mind had been polished and improved by intercourse with the world, so that he was now a very superior man, fitted to grace the most refined society. When he left, Mrs. Stanmore felt happier than she had done since the death of her husband.

He deposited the money in bank the next day as he said he would ; and thus it was Ella Stanmore became a pupil at the Academy of Visitation.

But we have made a long digression, and it is time we should return to the quiet precinct of the convent.

The chapel is filled to overflowing : the priest has just finished the sacrifice of the mass, when three maidens, clothed in white, with white veils thrown over them, advance and kneel beside the sanctuary. They bow their heads as if in prayer. A few notes from the organ steal upon the ear, then it ceases, and a gush of music, from the lips of the maidens, fills the chapel. The music is thrillingly beautiful, and the following words are distinctly heard as their voices blend together in melody :

Our Lady most blessed,
Shed on us a ray
Of thy own pure devotion,
And teach us the way
To keep our spirits
Unspotted and pure
From every vain fancy
Which young hearts allure.

Our Lady most blessed,
Before thee we bow,
Give us grace, Holy Mother,
To keep our vow ;
To renounce every folly
That dazzles to win
The hearts of poor mortals
To error and sin.

Our Lady most blessed,
Deep grief hast thou known,
O'er our pathway, should sorrow
And trials be thrown,—
Should the bright hopes of youth
Fade like dew-drops away
In life's darkest hours,
Be near us, we pray.

Our Lady most blessed,
In that trying hour,
When death o'er us all
Doth assert his dread power,
We pray thee be near us—
Receive our last sigh,
Then bear us triumphant
To mansions on high.

When the singing ceased, there was a perfect stillness for at least a minute. All present seemed to be under the influence of holy feelings. Even the heart of Mrs. Grayson, the gay woman of fashion, seemed touched by this beautiful dedication of her child ; and Mr. Grayson, the self-possessed, strong-minded statesman and philosopher, was almost overcome with emotion. He trembled like an aspen, whilst tears, which he could not repress, flowed down his cheek. It was indeed a touchingly beautiful sight to see these lovely maidens, just bursting into womanhood, dedicating themselves to the service of God.

When the beautiful and significant sacrament of baptism, as administered in the Catholic church, was concluded, and the maidens retired, they were met at the door by Imogen Delacroix, who threw her arms around them, and kissed each rapturously, saying :

"Oh, you are all so pure, so good, sorrow surely will never come near you ; and as for our sweet, gentle-hearted Ella, she looks as if she were never meant for earth, but was an angel sent among us by mistake."

"Nay, nay, dear Imogen, you would not say so could you look into my heart and see all its weaknesses and faults. And as for sorrow, that is the destiny of every creature who dwells on earth, but I thank my Heavenly Father that He has taught me where to look for support in the hour of sorrow."

Conversing thus, they retired to their room.

Was Imogen a true prophet? Was life to them unclouded by sorrow? Ah! no; over the life of each, did a dark wave of sorrow roll.

As the serpent found his way even in the garden of Eden to bring sorrow and sin to that abode of purity and innocence, so did an evil spirit find its way into this place of quiet and happiness. And it was embodied in a form beautiful, as seemed the serpent to mother Eve's fascinated eyes. Clementina Wilkie had been in school but a few days previous to the event I have just described, and when she saw that Ella Stanmore was a favorite of all the girls, jealousy took possession of her heart. In personal appearance, she and Ella were the antipodes of each other as they were in character.

Ella was a slight, sylph-like figure, and every motion was un-studied grace. Her eyes were of that azure hue that reminds one of heaven, with an expression that bespoke a soul overflowing with sensibility, and every emotion of her mind could be read in her speaking face. Her brown silken hair hung in natural ringlets.

Clementina was tall and perfectly graceful, for she did not move a muscle or a limb without thinking what effect it would have. Her eyes were dark as jet, and, at times, when she was angry, they glittered like those of a serpent, but that was the only indication of it you saw, for dissimulation seemed natural to her, and she never permitted her feelings to be depicted on her countenance. Her hair was black and glossy as the raven's wing; and when she wrapped it in shining braids around her well formed head, she was perfectly beautiful. She could not injure Ella Stanmore whilst at school, where all knew and loved her, but when they had completed their education and mingled in the same society, she was more successful in her arts.

CHAPTER III.

THE BIRTH-NIGHT PARTY.

"Good morning, Mary," said Mrs. Wilmer, as Mrs. Carlton, with the freedom of a privileged friend, entered the room where she was engaged in sewing; "some mesmeric influence must have drawn you hither, for I was just thinking of you."

"I called round to tell you Mrs. Grayson intends giving a grand party on Annie's birth-day; she and Emma are such friends that we are invited. Is not that quite an honor, to be invited to the distinguished and aristocratic Mrs. Grayson's?"

"Mary, I am surprised that, with your natural good sense, you do not understand human nature better."

"Why so, Hannah?"

"Because you know Mrs. Grayson does not invite you to her parties because she respects you, but because Emma is beautiful and accomplished, possessing that rare talent of improvising both song and music. And Mrs. Grayson knows, by presenting one so gifted, it will create a sensation, and cause Annie's birth-day party to be remembered when it would otherwise be forgotten."

"Well, I don't care what motive prompts her. It will be the means of introducing Emma into the most distinguished circles of society. Let her once be known in that society, and I have no fears but she will make a conquest that will place her permanently in that position."

"Don't be too sanguine in such an expectation. There are too many accomplished and portionless beauties, who gild such

society, hoping to win a wealthy or distinguished husband. Sometimes they succeed, but it more frequently happens, although every home comfort is sacrificed by a vain and scheming mother that the daughter may have the means of appearing elegantly dressed at these parties and places of public display, that their beauty fades ere they attain this object. Their accomplishments are displayed till they cease to attract attention, and then, those wealthy and distinguished persons who have used them, as they would an ornament, to add to the attractions of their drawing-rooms, when their beauty fades, throw them by as they would a soiled ornament which no longer decorates. And the beauty who has learned to despise the quiet and heart-felt joys of home, and thinks life has no enjoyment but that derived from excitement and gay society, instead of repaying the mother for the sacrifices she has made, by assisting her in taking care of the smaller children, and imparting to them the accomplishments which she possesses, but which the parents are unable to give the other members of the family, adds to the cares of the mother by her fretfulness and ill temper."

"But Emma does not belong to that class; her greatest pleasure is, to instruct Leila, when at home."

"True, Emma is not now such a character. She has heart, elevation, and purity of character, and for that very reason, I would not have you place her where these high and noble qualities might be debased, nor would I have her young heart pained by feeling she was merely tolerated in the society of those, to whom she is superior in every respect, save that of position."

"Well, Hannah! it is no use talking, you will never convince me of the correctness of your notions. I think it natural for every one to try to associate with the best society."

"True, but we differ in our notions of what constitutes the best society. In my opinion, that is the best society, where the purest morality is found and the highest intellectual culture exists; you think that society best, where there is most splendor and elegance of dress. It is this mistaken notion that causes many to affect a style of living that they are unable to support, and in the end, it is the cause of wretchedness and suffering.

They contract debts, lose the respect of their fellow citizens, their own self-respect, and finally, when they can obtain no more credit, and are obliged to change their style of living, those, for whose society they have incurred all this, and who have partaken of their hospitality, eaten and praised their sumptuous dinners, will pass them by with contempt, saying, what fools they were to attempt a style of living beyond their means. It is to prevent you from falling into this error, that I speak thus plainly."

Mrs. Carlton and Mrs. Wilmer were cousins, had gone to the same school and had been playmates in childhood, and though as unlike as possible in their notions of things, they loved each other as sisters.

Annie Grayson's birth-day party was the theme of conversation in the houses of the five hundred dear friends invited upon the occasion. Reclining on a rich lounge in the boudoir of her aunt, Mrs. Parkinson, lay Clementina Wilkie, whilst the following conversation passed between them.

"Clem, I will spare no expense to get you an elegant dress for Mrs. Grayson's party, and you must eclipse all the beauties there, save the daughter of the hostess."

"That will not be easily done, aunt! For Emma Carlton and Ella Stanmore will be there, and although neither of them have any right to be admitted to such society, yet, being invited by Mrs. Grayson, will secure them attention, and as they are both beautiful, and new faces in society, they will attract much admiration."

"Well, you can eclipse them in the elegance of your dress."

"Yes, that will be some gratification, but still it is provoking that they should be invited. There will soon be no such thing as select society in Washington, when such as they, are to be met, even at Mrs. Grayson's."

"If I were you, I would treat them with marked neglect."

"No, no, Aunt! that won't do; for they are particular friends of Annie Grayson, and by that means I should incur her coldness."

"Do as you please. I have perfect confidence in your judg-

ment; but here comes the carriage, let us go and make our purchases. As you are no longer a school girl, I will get you some handsome jewelry, so dismiss that frown from your brow, for it mars your beauty very much."

Annie's birth-day arrives, and although it is December, the air is balmy as a spring day. Young hearts bound merrily at the anticipated pleasures of the evening, and the impression they shall make on their first presentation in society as young ladies; for Annie, as well as several of her friends, has just completed her education, and this is her first party.

The elegant rooms of Mrs. Grayson are brilliantly lighted; music's merry strains invite to the dance; sets are forming, when a gentleman of great personal beauty, and polished grace of manner, approaches Annie, saying:

"Dear Coz, will you present me to that lovely girl, with whom you were conversing a moment since. I never looked upon a face that interested me so much. In expression it reminds one of the Madonna, so pure, so gentle."

"Ah, I will with pleasure! it is darling Ella, and her face indicates her character truly. I sometimes fancy she is not destined to remain long with us, she is so pious, so amiable. Oh, cousin Fred, I am so glad you arrived just to-day, so that none of my friends know the relationship you bear to me, and I can watch the impression each makes upon you." She presented him to Ella Stanmore, and whilst they are engaged in dance, we will give you a bit of his history.

He is the only child of a sister of Mr. Grayson. Both his parents are dead, leaving him in possession of one of the largest estates in Louisiana. He usually spent his winters in New-Orleans, but had come to spend the present winter in Washington, at the urgent solicitation of Annie, who had written to him that this was her first winter in society, and he must positively come and spend the winter in this city. He had come on condition that she should present him to her fashionable friends as a poor relative, dependent on the bounty of her father, because he intended to find a wife among them, and he wished to be loved for himself, not for his possessions.

As Ella glided through the dance, with the grace of a sylph, the whispered inquiry ran through the room: "Who is she?" "Where is she from?" with the remark, How beautiful she is. And she was a perfect picture of loveliness. Her fair face, which usually had a rather pensive expression, was now lighted up with animation, and her dark auburn hair fell in glossy curls over her exquisitely formed neck and shoulders, whilst her deep blue eyes were raised to the face of her partner, speaking the pleasure she derived from the enjoyment of the dance. When she had taken her seat, Clementina Wilkie, who had listened, with a heart filled with envy, to the expressions of admiration that her appearance elicited, approached her with one of her brightest smiles, saying:

"Ella dear, I always thought you lovely, but to-night you even surpass yourself. But pray tell me, who was the elegant gentleman with whom you were dancing?"

"I only know he is from the South, and his name is Leroux."

"He dances elegantly."

"Yes, and he conversed beautifully."

"Does he intend remaining long in the city?"

"During the winter."

Just at this moment Mr. Leroux approached and was presented by Ella, to Miss Wilkie. This was the object for which she had approached Ella. She could not bear to see Ella receiving the attention of one of the most distinguished looking gentlemen in the room, and she determined she would monopolize his attention during the balance of the evening. For this purpose she exerted herself to be brilliant and interesting, and as she possessed fine conversational powers, she detained him by her side for some time, but the impression she made was not as favorable as she supposed. Annie, who came up to him when Clementina had been claimed for the dance by another gentleman, said,

"Ah, cousin, the dark-eyed Clementina seems to have captivated you."

"No, no, not so."

"You seemed to listen enraptured to the remarks that flowed from her rosy lips. Mind, I have been noting you closely."

"I was an attentive, but not enraptured listener, to her elegantly rounded periods; but it seems to me she talks by rule, not from the heart. There is more soul in one glance from the soft blue eye of Miss Stanmore, than in all the high flown sentimentality that Miss Wilkie has been pouring into my ear. I don't like dark eyed beauties nohow."

"Stop, stop Fred, and look at the color of my eyes. You must learn to compliment one, without wounding the vanity and self love of another."

"Well, well, I will be your pupil, you must teach me that art."

But where is Emma Carlton, that she has not been spoken of, during the evening. She is the centre of an admiring crowd in another part of the room. Although this is her first appearance in society, there is a queenly grace and dignity about her that commands respect and admiration. Toward the close of the evening she, with Annie and some other friends, loitered in the music room. Annie, who was anxious to display the talents of her friend, proposed music, and insisted that Emma should take a seat at the harp and give them something suited to the scene. She, with that desire to please which characterized her, drew the harp to her, and running her fingers over its strings, a sweet gush of melody filled the room, and in a voice soft and silvery she warbled the following:

You bid me touch the harp strings,
And call forth some glad lay,
According with this festive scene,
Where all are joyous, gay;
Where fairy forms of beauty,
Glide through the mazy dance,
And music, with its witching spell,
The spirit doth entrance.

Glad hearts with joy are swelling,
And life unto them seems,
A path on which the sunlight,
Will ever shed his beams;
And some bright hope is budding,
In every youthful breast,
Which, when it shall be realized,
Will make them truly blest.

May no dark cloud of sorrow,
E'er cast upon each brow,
A deeper shade of thought or care,
Than rests upon it now.
Oh beautiful, most beautiful,
Unto my vision seems,
The glimpses of the future,
That o'er my spirit gleams.

There is music breathing round me, •
There is beauty in my sight,
And friends whose tones fall kindly,
Upon my ear to night,
And when a year hath fitted by,
I trust we all may be,
As joyous as we are to-night,
As full of mirth and glee.

When she rose from the harp, a murmur of applause greeted her. It was not the beauty of the song, but the grace with which she touched the instrument, and the thrilling, earnest character of the music that called forth admiration.

Time ever flies most rapidly when pleasure gilds his wings. And the young friends of Annie found it so on this, her eighteenth birth day. As they bade her adieu, she told them she would expect to meet them all on her next birth-day, with hearts as full of gayety as they were to-night. It is a wise provision of nature that young hearts always look on the bright side of life. When the last guest had departed, Mrs. Grayson told Annie, that henceforth she must be more particular in selecting her friends. Now that she would mingle in society, her school-girl friendships must be given up, and her associations must be with persons distinguished for wealth or position.

"Mother, I think the friendships contracted at school should be cherished, for there you see the character as it is; but in society, the real character is hidden, and the gentlest smile, often covers the falsest heart."

"Yes, but a certain propriety should be observed in conformity with the notions of society. For instance, it is not altogether proper, that you, a senator's daughter, should associate with the mere common people, because you may have found them amiable

and worthy. Now, that you go in society, you must have your associations with those of your own rank."

"Rank," repeated Frederick Leroux, who had been an interested listener to Mrs. Grayson's remarks. "Why, my dear aunt, that is a new word to use in reference to society, in democratic America. How long do you suppose my uncle would retain his rank as senator, did his constituents know the opinions entertained by his family?"

"There is no need of their knowing it. When we are at home we can associate with them familiarly. There is no necessity for such distinctions in society there, as exist here."

"Do all Senators, and persons holding distinguished offices, have two sets of principles to govern their conduct, one for Washington and one for home?"

"Oh, no, there are some of them as unsophisticated, or to use a westernism, which expresses more precisely the idea I wish to convey, they are as *green* as Annie, and act upon the same principles in their intercourse with society here, that they do at home. But we, who are the real leaders of the *ton*, regard them as scarcely belonging to our set."

"Cousin," said Annie laughingly, "I do not wish to show disrespect to the opinions of my dear mamma, but I must tell you, it is not the senators themselves, who make these distinctions in society here in Washington, but their lady wives. Although mamma is so exclusive in her notions, papa appreciates every one for his own intrinsic merit, regardless of what his position may be. And he permits me to select my friends in the same manner."

"Yes, and that is the reason I have so much trouble with you."

"I think, when I follow the opinions of papa, I shall not err greatly."

"What does a man know about these nice shades of distinction in society?"

"I really confess I know nothing about them," said Fred, "will you enlighten me, Cousin Annie?"

"I am just from school and am not competent to do so, but

you will remain here during the winter, and being a member of *our* family, you will have access to, and be an honored guest in the highest circles, and if you will keep your eyes and ears open, you will learn those nice distinctions, yourself. Now, do not suppose I wish to imply, that all those who form that circle, have no right to that position but that derived from wealth and office. Usually office is conferred on account of merit, and superiority of intellect, consequently, in no place can more intellectual and refined society be met with, than in the best circles of Washington. Yet, there are a few, who have, by fortunate circumstances, been elevated to the highest positions, whose associations in early life were with the ignorant and uneducated, and it is such as these who are afraid of compromising their dignity by associations beneath them, whilst the truly great never think of such things. They are conscious of their own worth, and have no fear but others will appreciate them."

"Well, I will take due advantage of my favorable position for observing society, and trust, with some assistance from the good taste of yourself, and my aunt, I shall be able to estimate it correctly."

"Tell us what impression was made upon you to-night."

"Ahem—I don't exactly like to tell," said he, placing his hand upon his heart.

"Heart affected?"

"Do you believe in love at first sight?"

"I have never thought anything about it, but have never experienced any such symptoms myself."

"Well, I cannot say, but a pair of blue eyes, and a mass of auburn curls, seem to occupy a prominent position in the picture impressed upon the tablet of my memory, as I recur to the gay scene, in which I have been an actor this evening."

"Take care, take care, she is one of the people."

"How came she here?"

"She was merely tolerated on my account; she is one of my school-girl friendships."

"I am sure, if I were you, it is one that I should cherish. If

her face is an index of her heart, which I believe it to be, you could not have a friend more deserving."

"Ah, Fred, I think you are in danger, but perhaps a sleep will restore the tone of your nerves, so I will leave you wishing you pleasant dreams."

CHAPTER IV.

THE WARNING.

ANNIE, although enjoying all the opportunity for self-indulgence that wealth bestows, never yielded to indolence or sloth. She had been accustomed to early rising when at school, and when she had completed her education, and was about leaving the Academy, Sister Angelique, who was remarkable for her piety, active benevolence, and thorough knowledge of human nature, had impressed it upon her, that she should continue to practice the habits she had acquired. She told her, although she would no longer have to study the morning lesson, she should not waste that hour in sleep, but employ it in reading some useful work, or doing some act of kindness to a fellow being to whom fortune had been less kind than to herself. She had followed the advice of Sister Angelique, and made it a constant rule to rise with the lark, winter and summer; and when the weather was pleasant, she would visit the abodes of the lowly, and her voice was music to the ear of many a toil-worn mother. She ever accompanied the little gifts she bestowed upon them with words of encouragement and kindness, which enhanced the value of the gifts. Her name was mingled with the evening prayer that rose from many a heart. The morning following her birth-day party, she had just returned from one of those visits of charity, when her cousin met her at the door.

"What," said he, "thus early abroad! I supposed after the fatigue and excitement of last evening, we should not see you till noon at least; but here you are, looking as bright and beautiful, almost, as the dreams that haunted my pillow last night."

"Then you did have pleasant dreams?"

"Most assuredly I did."

"I cannot stop now to inquire their import, for by this time Aunt Airy has her breakfast ready, and I cannot bear to make her wait a moment for me."

She was considerate towards the servants, giving them as little trouble as possible, and they almost worshiped her.

When they met in the breakfast room, to Fred's look of inquiry for his aunt, who was not present, she told him that her mother always took her breakfast at a later hour, and in her own room.

When they had finished the morning meal, Fred told his cousin he wished to go to the Senate, and as it was his first visit there, he would beg the favor of her company. She readily assented, and twelve o'clock found them in the gallery of the Senate, which was filled with the beauty and fashion of the city. This being his first visit, he wished to hear all that was said by the senators, but he happened to be seated next Miss Wilkie, who wished to play the agreeable, and show him she could converse with as much fluency on grave matters of state, as she could upon the frivolities of fashion. He listened to her remarks with polite attention, which caused her to suppose she had deepened the favorable impression she fancied she had made on the previous evening.

When they returned from the Senate, Annie told Fred, she thought he had given more attention to Miss Wilkie's conversation than he did to the speeches of the Senators. He replied :

"Of course, I could not treat a lady rudely ; she claimed my attention in such a manner that I could not refuse it. But I do think—begging your pardon, cousin—that if ladies go to the Senate Chamber only to display their elegant bonnets, attract admiration, get a nod and a smile from senators, or to chat with their friends, that they would better stay away, and let their seats be occupied by gentlemen, and those who wished to listen to the debates of the Senate."

"That is precisely my opinion."

"I am glad that it is, for I can assure you I was very much

annoyed to-day that I could not be permitted to listen quietly to the debates."

"I should suppose that a young gentleman would have felt flattered, that so beautiful a girl, as you must admit Clementina to be, should have taken so much pains to interest you."

"Yes, she is beautiful; but when she raises her dark eyes to my face, as if she would read my thoughts, there is a voice within me which seems to say, 'Beware, she is your evil genius.'"

"I believe you are superstitious."

"No."

"Well, how do you account for this fancy?"

"I do not attempt to account for it, but I think the sweet smile of your friend Miss Stanmore would exorcise the evil spirit."

"When we have taken tea, we will call around and spend an hour with her, and you will find the mother a very superior woman. Though she does not mingle much in society, she possesses an elegance of manner that would grace any circle."

The call was made, and the gentle, affectionate deference of Ellen to her mother won a more profound admiration from Fred, than her grace and beauty had done.

Their little parlor was not expensively furnished, but neat and comfortable. Yet, the visitor of refined and cultivated tastes, though accustomed to the elegant furniture with which wealth loves to surround itself, did not miss its presence in this dwelling; for the interest inspired by both mother and daughter was such, that it seemed they were just fitted for the home in which they dwelt.

Whilst Frederick Leroux was enjoying the pleasant society of Ella and her mother, Clementina Wilkie was devising plans for attracting him to herself. As she looked on her graceful person and perfect beauty of feature with a complexion of clearest brunette, her dark eye flashed with triumph, and she soliloquized thus:

"He cannot resist my charms, nay, he shall not. I know my power and will use it. It is strange the interest I feel in this

stranger. I, who have listened, unmoved, to the compliments of distinguished foreigners, senators, and others holding high positions in society; or at least, with no other emotion than that of gratified vanity, that I possessed the power of eliciting such compliments. But this acquaintance of a day, I feel that it is the great aim of my life to bring him to my feet, and should I fail—but I will not fail. Have I ever failed yet, to accomplish any thing I purposed? No, no, I know human nature too well. It has been my study from childhood. There is no heart, but what I can learn its weakness. Even my aunt, I can govern at my will, and there are few natures like hers."

A low silvery laugh filled the room, as she stood before the magnificent mirror and rearranged the mass of dark shining hair that was folded around her finely formed head. A look of scorn flashed across her features whilst she added:

"But I believe it is a spirit of perverseness. I noted the look of admiration with which he regarded the sweet baby face of Ella Stanmore, and at that moment a desire took possession of me to attract him to myself. Should she come between me and my wishes, I could crush her, as I would an insect. The human heart is a strange thing. Even mine, that I thought was under the perfect control of my will, shows a disposition to rebel. Well, well, we will see," said she, turning from the mirror, and throwing herself on a superb sofa; and, reclining on its damask cushions, she sank into a reverie.

Had the spirit which enshrined that beautiful form been imbued with piety and truth, Clementina would have been one of earth's brightest gems. She possessed intellect of a high order. She was ambitious and aspiring, and she had stored her mind with solid knowledge and light literature; but the pure truthful heart was wanting, and that marred her loveliness.

Her aunt would sometimes say to her:

"Clementina, you know you are to be the possessor of all my wealth; and what is the use of your devoting so much time to reading and study. Your wealth, beauty, and accomplishments are such, that you can captivate whom you choose. Enjoy your-

self, and leave study for those who are under the necessity of earning their living by their wits."

"No, no, aunt," she would reply, "I am ambitious of being considered the most distinguished lady in the city. Any pretty simpleton who has money, may, with the assistance of the milliner and mantua-maker, make an elegant appearance, and attract admiration; but, I wish to do more: I would attract by my appearance, and enchain by my talents. I would not have persons say of me, She is charming until you hear her talk, then the charm disappears, for the nonsense she utters disenchants you."

In conversation she excelled; and she determined to avail herself of every opportunity of making an impression on Frederick Leroux.

She never appeared to more advantage than at a dinner-party composed of distinguished and intellectual persons. Knowing this, she proposed to her aunt that invitations to a dinner-party should be issued, and none but the most distinguished be invited, including the family of Mr. Grayson.

The invitations were sent and accepted. It was seldom a regret was sent to Mrs. Parkinson, for her dinners were gotten up in the most superb manner, and Clementina's conversational powers spread a charm over the entertainment that made them very pleasant and interesting.

At six o'clock precisely, the guests were all assembled in the brilliantly-lighted and luxuriously furnished drawing-room. They were composed of persons most distinguished for talent and position, and Clementina, with a tact exclusively her own, managed to make each feel that he was the particularly honored guest. Although her whole object was to make an impression on Frederick Leroux, she was careful not to be seated next him at the dinner table, but on the opposite side, so that the deference and admiration, which she received from the gentleman who was seated by her side, might be observed by him. She felt if she could only secure his attention, it would not be possible for him to regard her with indifference. And she had calculated rightly, for ere the evening had passed, the repulsion he had at first felt towards her, was dissipated, and he was interested. When they

returned to the drawing-room after dinner, she engaged him in conversation; and as his attention was wholly given to her, he was perfectly fascinated whilst listening to her sweet voice. She during the evening learned he was passionately fond of chess, and as she played this game remarkably well, she challenged him to call the next evening and take a game with her. He, as a matter of course, accepted the invitation. A sparkle of triumph flashed from her eyes, for she felt she now could appropriate as much of his time as she chose; for the chess-player, when engaged in his favorite amusement, is unmindful of the lapse of time.

When the family of Mr. Grayson returned from the dinner-party of Mrs. Parkinson, Mrs. Grayson, who, when not engaged in visiting or receiving company herself, generally spent her time in lounging upon a sofa, retired to her own room; and Mr. Grayson, who always had business to occupy him, was engaged in his study, leaving Frederick and Annie to discuss the dinner-party with all the animation which young persons generally feel when first going into society.

"Ah, cousin," said Annie, "I think Clementina has captivated you, from the manner with which you listened to the musical intonations of her voice, and her beautifully rounded periods."

"I am not captivated but fascinated. She steals one's senses as it were, whilst the heart is untouched."

"That is because there is no heart about her. She owes her faculty of pleasing to her mental cultivation, whilst the more elevated moral qualities are neglected. We have too many such women in this city."

"I have only had a glimpse of the society of your city, and already feel bewildered, excited. My thoughts do not flow in that quiet manner in which they were wont to flow."

"Perhaps a little music would have a good effect in restoring your equanimity."

"If you will sing some sweet, simple air, such as used to lull my restless spirit when a child. Whatever I love, I love passionately. There is no medium in my temperament. Oh, by-the-by, cousin, do you play chess?"

"Not well."

"Chess playing is my passion, and Miss Wilkie has invited me to take a game with her to-morrow evening."

"Few ladies play as well as she."

"It requires mind to play well—but give me a song, I would prefer music to chess this evening."

Annie drew near the harp, and after a sweet prelude, sang in a voice of exquisite sweetness :

It is not in the banquet hall,
Or pleasure's giddy round,
Where life seems full of hope and joy,
That truest hearts are found.

There, bright eyes flash, and steal away,
The spirit for awhile,
And gentle words fall on the ear,
Enhanced by beauty's smile.

Let those whom fortune favored most,
By sorrow be o'ertaken,
Then oh, how soon those summer friends,
Will leave them, lone, forsaken.

And friends with whom in happier hours,
They've mingled in the dance,
Now pass them with a chilling bow,
Or with averted glance.

When Annie rose from the harp, he remarked in voice tremulous with emotion.

"'Tis strange, that you should have selected the very air that my mother always sang for me in boyhood, when she wished to win my thoughts from any unpleasant subject. Oh, how I idolized my mother."

"I have often heard my father speak of her pure, artless character. He says, Ella Stanmore reminds him of what Aunt Annie was at her age, more than any one he ever saw."

"Sweet Ella Stanmore. 'Tis true, she has the same heavenly blue eye, and pure unselfish character. When I am in her presence, I feel that the chastening influence, which restrained my wayward boyhood, is yet around me. It is her resemblance to

my sainted mother, that makes me feel that I could enshrine her in my heart as its living divinity."

"If you feel thus toward Ella, beware of Miss Wilkie: she is no friend of Ella."

"You are mistaken, cousin. You should have heard her speak of Ella to me last night;—you yourself could not have spoken more glowingly."

"I have heard her rhapsodies; but I know her well—she is as wily as the arch fiend himself; she praises that she may the more surely injure. She reads hearts as others read books; and she knew, if she had spoken otherwise than in praise of Ella, it would have fallen on a deaf ear. But she spoke of her as a friend who loved her dearly—thus she secured your attention, and she will often refer to her with words of friendship; but yet, she will, after a while, begin to point out any little faults Ella may have in the kindest spirit imaginable, regretting that a character, so nearly perfect, should not be quite so."

"But Ella has no faults."

"So you now think; but if Clementina once gets you into her wiles, she will make you see faults."

"Never!"

"We will see."

"She will not attempt it, because I have expressed to her my admiration of Ella's character."

"Perhaps our conversation of to-night may recur to you at some future period. I have spoken to you thus, because I see she is resolved to add you to her list of admirers, of whom she has not a few, and when she thus resolves, she never fails."

"Cousin Annie, you are only jealous because she can draw around her and enchain by her conversation the most renowned statesmen as well as the more inexperienced like myself."

"No, Fred, I have no wish to attract the admiration of the crowd; I only wish to be enshrined in one noble, truthful heart."

"From what I have seen of the ladies of this city, who are in the habit of mingling constantly in society, it strikes me that the ruling passion of all, both married and unmarried, is to attract admiration."

"There is too much truth in your remark. There are many whose only aim in life is to be thus distinguished. But you must not say all, for I know many, who possess all the retiring, sweet, womanly virtues, that constitute a perfect female character."

"Well, well, I will suspend my judgment till the winter is past; but it seems to me, if I were a senator or congressman, I should almost fear to bring my wife to this city: the constant round of visiting and excitement, in which her position almost obliges her to engage, might destroy her taste for those home pleasures, which is the sweetest charm of life."

"To a mind rightly balanced, there is no danger of any such effect being produced. They will appreciate the more, home and its pleasures."

"I have visited New Orleans, St. Louis, and other cities of the South and West, been introduced to, and associated with the most refined circles, but must admit there is a fascination in Washington society that is to be met with nowhere else. You are here every day brought in contact with men whose bare presence, in any other city, would create an excitement. As Paris has been designated the centre of attraction for the world, so Washington may be called the centre of attraction in the United States."

CHAPTER. V.

THE SLEIGHING PARTY.

It is deep, deep winter. The gently undulating and wide-spread prairies of Illinois, which in summer, when the tall grass, with which they are covered, is gently swayed, to and fro, by the zephyr's kiss, presented to the eye a picture resembling the bosom of the dark green sea, when ruffled by a light breeze, are now covered with snow. The thousand voices, that made this scene vocal with music during the bright summer days, are now hushed. No sound is heard save the sleigh bells' merry jingle. In a capacious farmhouse, on the border of one of these wide spread prairies, all seems activity and bustle. The good wife is arranging pies, cakes, jams and jellies, whilst one of the daughters is busied in preparing poultry for the oven, and the rich fumes of the kitchen indicate, that the herds of deer, that abound so gracefully over the prairies of the west, have contributed their share towards furnishing the bounteous feast that is in preparation. But what is the cause of this preparation? Ah, a sleighing party from Quincy is expected, and the talented young Editor of one of the newspapers of that city, is to form one of the party. He came from Washington city, that of itself would give him distinction with the fair belles of this western region, but EDWIN STANMORE, for 'tis he, good reader, was looked up to with respect, by old men and politicians. About three years previous to the time of which I am speaking, he had come to Quincy, and established his paper. His honorable, upright course, and the talent with which he advocated the principles of the party to which he belonged, caused him to be regarded as a leader of

that party, and they were already speaking of him as a candidate to represent them in Congress.

His time was devoted to the duties which devolved on him as Editor, and it was seldom he joined in a pleasure party. But in this instance he had accepted the cordial invitation of farmer Edwards, who told him if he refused, he should think partiality for his city associations, made him feel above associating with the plain farmers of the West. Thus urged he could not refuse. Mr. Edwards was one of the early settlers of Illinois, and was personally acquainted with almost every family in Quincy. All the young folks of the village, for at this early period, Quincy was only a village, were invited. These, with the neighbors within the vicinity, would form a large party, and preparations were made to entertain them with true Western hospitality. The sun, whose bright rays had been reflected back from the crystallized surface of the snow, during the day, with a brilliancy almost blinding, is now sinking low in the western horizon. Mrs. Edwards surveys with a satisfied look, the long table spread in the dining room, and loaded with the delicious viands, and delicacies with which a Western farmer's larder abounds, and which his wife and daughters know so well how to serve up for their guests. Being satisfied that every thing was arranged to her taste, she turned to her two blooming daughters, Kate and Bell, saying:

"Now girls, it is nearly sundown, you would better go dress. The sleighs will be coming in soon, and you must be ready to receive the company. I guess I can manage every thing myself now until supper is ready."

"Let Kate go dress," said the merry-hearted Bell, "I will help you awhile longer; you know Kate wants to make a conquest of Mr. Stanmore, but as I have no such ambition, there is no need of my giving any extra finish to my toilet."

"I guess Mr. Stanmore has too much good sense to judge the character of his acquaintances by their dress."

"Well, well, Kate, that may be, but I, myself, like to see you dressed in your best, for although a country maiden, you equal any lady of them all."

Just at this moment the old farmer, who was bustling through the house to see that each room had good fires, came into the dining room.

"Mother," said he, "aint you nearly through with your preparations? I am afraid Kate and Bell will be so tired by the time the company comes they will not enjoy themselves."

"Why, who ever heard of a country girl that tired in preparing to entertain her friends. Tired indeed, why I intend to make a conquest of your sage, Mr. Stanmore, to-night, if Kate does not."

"Go along, mad cap, it is the expectation of seeing somebody else, to-night, that gives you such fine spirits."

"Who, papa?"

"Oh, yes, who papa, who is it that is always coming to ask my advice about farming, and Miss Bell's opinion about furnishing his new house, and what mother thinks—but, whew! the gypsy's gone."

The bleak winds swept over the dreary snow-clad prairie, rendering the atmosphere biting cold, but the merry sleighing party heed it not. Enveloped in buffalo robes to protect them from the cold, they skim over the smooth roads with almost the fleetness of a bird, whilst music of the sleigh bells, makes their young hearts bound joyously. Arrived at their destination, they find warmth and cheerfulness in the domicile of Mr. Edwards, also in the hearts of its inmates. The cheerful fire blazes high upon the hearth, and words of kindly greeting fall upon the ear, whilst bright eyes fairly dance with delight, and merry voices chatter, "Oh, there is nothing so exhilarating as a sleigh ride over a western prairie." When they had taken off their wrapping, and thoroughly warmed themselves, the fiddler, who had been provided for the occasion, took his position in one corner of the room, and drew the bow over the strings of his violin, as much as to say, I am ready; let those who wish to dance take their places on the floor; and it was not long till light forms were gliding through the dance. Although the bright lights, exquisite music, and elegant dresses, which give brilliancy to the Washington Assemblies, were not there, yet there was more true heartfelt enjoyment than is to be

found at these assemblies. The company was composed of neighbors and friends, each known to the other. They had met together to enjoy a mutual interchange of kindly feeling, not to display the elegance of their toilet and attract the admiration of the crowd by the artistic skill with which they whirled through the waltz. Indeed, such a thing as waltzing was unknown at that time in the western part of Illinois. But there was much native grace and beauty among the fair daughters of Illinois. And as Edwin Stanmore gazed upon their light forms as they glided through the dance, and their fresh, blooming complexions, untouched by powder or paint, he said within himself, "Were it not for the remembrance of a face of beauty, and a voice of music, whose tones have thrilled my heart since early boyhood, and which have been mingled with all my hopes and aspirations, I should be in danger of being captivated by the flashing eye and ready wit of the merry-hearted, witching Bell Edwards; but the memory of Annie Grayson is interwoven with my very heart-strings, and no change of place or scene can efface it. Yet, what folly; perhaps even now she has been wooed and won by some rising statesman or distinguished foreigner. Annie's character is such as will attract the admiration and win the love of the noblest mind. She has all the graces and accomplishments of her sex, without any of their foibles and weakness. I well know what a winter in Washington may produce. This is her first winter in society. Ella writes me of the admiration she excites, and with what indifference she regards it. Well, well; had I the position before men, that I will attain, I would enter the lists as a competitor for her heart and hand. Little does she imagine the wild, deep, enduring dream of love, she has wakened in my heart. Little does she deem that the poor printer's boy, for as such only she knew me, dared to aspire, even in thought, to the love of the daughter of the distinguished senator. But, printing is a noble art, and he who engages in it with a determination to elevate himself, may succeed in winning some of life's highest honors. I will win them! There is no obstacle that ambition, inspired by love, will not encounter and over

come. But it may be too late to realize my boyhood's dream. However, ——"

Just at this moment the merry voice of Bell Edwards fell on his ear, saying,—

"'Tis too bad, Mr. Stanmore, that you cannot give one evening to pleasure, but here you sit in one corner absorbed in inditing an editorial for your next paper."

"No, lady."

"Then an essay upon the frivolities of life."

"Not that either."

"Pray, what did occupy your thoughts? Here I have been practicing all the airs and graces of which I am mistress, to attract your attention, but, you were so absorbed in reverie, that you gave no heed to my efforts."

"I was thinking of a loved one far away, with whom I have often joined in the festive dance."

"That is a poor compliment to our Illinois belles."

"It is perfectly natural that the benevolent face of your own dear mother, should call up the remembrance of mine."

"Your mother, only your mother?" said Bell, looking mischievously into his face.

"And a sister, bright and beautiful as yourself."

"Ah! you can compliment. Only a mother and sister to claim your thoughts."

"I have none else to care for me, in the city of my childhood's home."

"Had that sweet sister no dear young friend, who would regard the brother for the sister's sake?"

"None."

"There may be some fair one who feels an interest in the brother, called forth by his own superior talent."

"That is a city in which talent is not apt to be discovered, unless accompanied by wealth, or possessing the influence of some distinguished personage to call attention to it."

"I have half a mind to fall in love with you myself. But let me see first if your heart be not pre-engaged. Give me your hand, I am an adept in the science of palmistry."

He extended his open hand. She looked at it a moment with seeming earnestness, and then looking into his face with a roguish smile, said :

"Well, the Hon. Mr. Stanmore—Honorable that is to be, you know papa and the other Democratic leaders, in this district, intend sending you to Congress in a year or two. That was what put it into my head to try make a conquest of you, so I might visit Washington. Would I not be a *Bell* in Washington, just fresh from the prairies of the West?"

"You would be a *belle*."

"But let me go on with the reading of the incidents of your life, the past and the future. There is a certain young lady in Washington, who has all the perfections of her sex with none of their faults. When Mr. Edwin Stanmore grew to man's estate, he happened to meet this perfect creature in society, and so charmed was he——"

"No, we played together from childhood."

"True enough, there is a line in your hand that I did not observe. You played together from childhood, and the consequence was, you learned to love each other, but the mother, who was a vain ambitious woman, treated Mr. Stanmore with so much *hauteur*, that he in a fit of indignation, resolves to go to the far West, win political honors, return to Washington as a member of Congress, and then breathe his love-tale into the ear of the daughter."

"That is a fancy sketch."

"Not altogether. You know you played together in childhood."

"There is a true friend with whom we played in childhood, but that does not imply that I fell in love with her."

"Oh no, you naturally loved her, without knowing when the sentiment took a form in your heart."

"You are a merry witch."

"Yes, and I love to see all merry about me. So you shall not sit here dreaming of absent beauties, when there are so many present, who claim your attention."

"Then honor me by dancing the next cotillion with me, I am sure I shall catch a portion of your glad spirit."

"Did you ever hear of such a disease as the blues?"

"I have heard ladies in the city complain of it frequently."

"I have never had anything of the kind myself, but have some idea how it affects one, and can give a certain cure for it. The moment any symptom of the disease is felt, go to work, do some act of kindness for a fellow creature, or make yourself useful in some way, and my word for it, you will not be troubled with the blues, horrors, or to express it more elegantly, *ennui*."

"Your cheerful spirit would drive such unpleasant visitants away."

"See, the sets are forming for the next dance, let us not loiter. Let me engage in what I may, I enter into it with my whole soul."

"You are a whole-souled creature any way."

"Ah, that I am, and whole-hearted too."

And thus chattering gaily, she won Edwin Stanmore from all sad thoughts, and he entered into the spirit of the dance with a zest unusual for him.

Music and mirth gave wings to time. The hours sped rapidly by, and ere the joyous young hearts, met together beneath the hospitable roof of farmer Edwards, had deemed the night was half gone, the rosy light of day peeped in upon them.

After partaking of a substantial breakfast, they returned to Quincy, and Edwin whilst he was in a merry mood, sat down and wrote to his mother a description of a Western sleighing party, and the hospitality of a Western farm house. He described the frank, generous character of the Western people, and concluded by portraying the warm hearted, unsophisticated character of Bell Edwards. Saying, her native loveliness and untaught grace of manner would create a sensation even in Washington. "Oh, she is a perfect fairy, lovely in mind as she is in person. I am growing to love my Western home very much: I would not live again in Washington. There is a freedom and independence in the manner of living here, that just suits me. The bosom seems to swell with more expanded, holier, nobler emotions, here amid nature's grandest scenes, than when mingling

in the society of, and yielding to the conventional rules that govern the actions of those who dwell in cities."

When Mrs. Stanmore read this letter to Annie, a feeling of something akin to pain passed through her heart. Although she had not admitted to herself, that she felt a deeper interest in Edwin Stanmore than in other acquaintances, yet the thought that he might love Bell Edwards, taught her that he was dearer to her than she had imagined. She was much admired, but the compliments she received, fell upon an indifferent ear. She took no pleasure in the gay scenes in which she mingled—her heart was not free. In this she was altogether unlike her mother, who as she grew older, seemed to covet with more avidity, those unmeaning phrases of flattery, which are ever poured into the ear of the votaries of fashion. Often was the daughter found beside the bed of sickness, in the abodes of poverty, administering to the wants of the poor, and breathing words of hope and encouragement to their drooping spirits.

One morning, just as she and her mother were stepping into the carriage to make some morning calls, an old colored woman to whom she had been very kind, came up to her, saying:

"Oh, dear Miss Annie, I's so sorry you is goin' a visitin'!"

"Why, what is the matter, Aunt Alice?"

"Oh, dear miss, there is a poor dear young lady, I know she is a raal born lady for all—she is so poor now! and she is in such trouble! She has no acquaintance, and her husband is so sick this mornin, he's got a perfect crazy fever, don't know nothin,' I'm 'feared he'll die, and poor dear lady, she's almost 'stracted. I thought as how if she had some female 'oman friend to say a comfortin word, she would feel better, so I thought I would jes come for you. Dear me, dear me, 'tis sich a pity you are goin a visitin'!"

"No, no, Aunt Alice, there is no need of my going, if there is a sorrowing heart to whom I can administer comfort." And turning to her mother, she said: "Dear mamma, you will excuse me to our friends, and I will go with Alice."

"Why not call on your friends first, and then visit this poor

family afterwards? I know your friends will feel disappointed if you do not accompany me."

"In the homes of luxury to which we were going, the fact that there is one visitor less, will scarce be noted; but in this lowly home to which Alice will conduct me, my voice may give consolation to an anguished heart."

"Deed, it will, Miss Annie, case every body say you's an angel of mercy."

"You can do as you please, Annie," said the mother, "but I am sure I would not deprive myself of the pleasure of seeing my friends, to run and look after all the poor in the city."

Annie, without making any reply, turned from the carriage and went with Alice. As they went along, she said:

"How do you know, Aunty, they are very poor?"

"By the way they lives, and besides I sold a mighty fine shawl for her. And I ollers knows, when ladies sells rich things, they's poor."

A few moments brought them to the door, and Annie heard the voice of the husband in frenzied raving, and the gentle voice of the wife endeavoring to quiet and re-assure him. Failing to do this, she heard her ejaculate in heart-rending tones:

"Oh, heavenly father! anything but this I could have borne, anything but this. Poverty, want, the abandonment of friends, all were nothing; but to see Charles suffering such agony, and be unable to relieve or procure medical aid, oh, 'tis too much, my heart will break!" and she sank on her knees beside the bed, sobbing as if her heart were indeed breaking.

Annie saw at a glance that she was truly, as Alice had said, a lady. Alice went up to her, saying:

"Mrs. Walton, this is Miss Grayson, the kind lady I told you about."

She rose to her feet, and Annie approached her, saying:

"Dear Mrs. Walton, Alice told me that you were a stranger in the city, and your husband was very ill. Thinking you might need the assistance of a female friend, I took the liberty of calling on you. Your husband is indeed very ill," said she, laying

her hand upon his fevered brow. "Have you had a physician?"

"Not yet."

"Permit me to recommend Doctor Riley, our family physician. Alice, go for him immediately."

"I thank you for your kindness, but have not the means of paying a physician's bill."

"Give yourself no uneasiness on that account. He is a kind, humane man, and will give your husband every attention."

The physician came, administered medicine, assuring Mrs. Walton there was no danger, but in a few days her husband would be restored to health. And she had reason to give credence to his words, for in the course of an hour he slept.

Annie then left her, with a promise of calling to see her often, telling her, should her husband grow worse, or should she feel lonely watching by him, to send Alice for her.

Mrs. Walton told her, her kindness to an unfortunate stranger would never be forgotten; that she had brought hope to a heart almost crushed with despair, and that Heaven would shower its choicest blessings on her head.

"Ah, it is seldom," said she, glancing at Annie's rich dress, "that the young and happy, occupying your position, think of the sufferings of others. I cannot sufficiently express my gratitude."

Without waiting to hear more, Annie hurried from the humble room, and stopping at Alice's, she placed her purse in her hand, telling her to go at once to Mrs. Walton's, and assist her in nursing her husband; and also provide every necessary comfort for them both.

CHAPTER VI.

A VISIT OF CHARITY.

ANNIE had been home some time, when her mother returned. She had enjoyed her morning visits very much. Entering the drawing-room where her daughter was seated, with a shade of thought upon her young brow, she said :

"You should have gone with me this morning; I met several distinguished persons at Mrs. Parkinson's. The lady of the French Minister called whilst I was there. She was accompanied by her nephew, who has just arrived in the city. He is one of the most elegant looking men I ever saw, and Clementina told me, he belongs to one of the noblest families of France. It is too bad that you were not with me to make his acquaintance."

"My dear mamma, I did much better; I made the acquaintance of one who needed friendship. I gave comfort to an almost breaking heart, and when I lay my head on my pillow to-night, the reflection of the manner in which I have spent the day, will give me more pleasure than to have added to my list of acquaintance the names of a dozen distinguished foreigners."

"Your education at the convent has ruined you; you are only fit to be a nun. Whilst other young girls are making acquaintances with the most distinguished gentlemen in the city, and making a display of their accomplishments, here you are hunting up the poor and sick, and devoting your time to them."

"You know, dear mamma, I think a young girl who is ever making a display of her accomplishments, to win admiration, is devoid of that true delicacy and modesty, which is the greatest charm of the female character."

"That will do very well to preach, not practice, in this city, where all make such display. No, no, it will not do; you will be quite overlooked unless you do as others do."

"I am content to be overlooked. I do not covet the admiration of the gay crowd."

"I have no patience with you. Of what use is your talents and education?"

"To give pleasure to my father, yourself, and our true friends, who know me well."

"It gives no pleasure to me. It only provokes me, to know you possess talents and accomplishments of the highest order, and are so little known. You are equal to Clementina Wilkie, and your name is never heard. But she—no stranger of any distinction comes to the city, but she becomes acquainted with him, and fascinates with her beauty, grace, and conversation. You never see her at a levee, assembly, or party, but she is surrounded by the most distinguished gentlemen; whilst you would be unknown, only for the distinguished position of your father and myself. I am completely out of patience with you."

Just as she uttered this sentence, Mr. Grayson entered. Seeing the excited manner of his wife, he said to her,—

"My dear, what has annoyed you?"

She repeated to him her opinions of Annie's folly, contrasted her conduct with Clementina Wilkie's, and ended by saying, if there was anything she detested, it was an old maid; and she knew Annie would be an old maid. Mr. Grayson listened attentively to his wife's complaints, and when she had done, he quietly remarked,—

"My dear, I should feel humbled to see my daughter make a parade of her accomplishments to win admiration. It is beneath the dignity of a lady."

"Oh, you think whatever Annie does, is just right."

"That is true. Her kind heart and good judgment always prompts her to pursue a course that I approve."

"Thank you, papa; I would rather have your approbation than the admiration of all the world beside."

Mrs. Grayson, complaining of weariness, retired to her own

room ; and the father and daughter were left to enjoy themselves in rational conversation. Annie, whose hand was ever open to do deeds of charity, was never limited in means by her father. When she told him of the scene of distress she had witnessed in the morning, he gave her a purse containing a hundred dollars, saying, she might use it as she chose. She slept sweetly that night, and early next morning she again visited Mrs. Walton.

She found old Alice watching beside the sick man's bed ; and the young wife, perfectly overcome with anxiety and fatigue, had sunk upon a rude lounge and fallen into a deep sleep. She took a seat near her and gazed with interest upon the sleeping form before her. It was a picture for the eye of a painter. Her features were cast in nature's most perfect mould—the long silken eye-lashes rested lovingly on the pale cheek upon which the trace of a tear was discernible, whilst the long, glossy hair, from which the comb had fallen, lay in a rich mass upon one arm that served as a pillow. She had gazed upon the fair pale face of the sleeper but a short time, when a look of anguish passed over the lovely features, and a deep sigh heaved the bosom ; but it was instantly succeeded by a smile, and Annie's ear caught the softly murmured words,—

“She is an angel, Charles,—she is an angel sent to save you.”

These words sent a thrill of truer pleasure to Annie's heart than the most delicately termed compliment, received from those who flutter round fortune's favorites, would have done.

She had been seated thus but a short time, when a low moan from the bed where the sick man lay, fell upon her ear. In a moment the young wife sprang to her feet, and was at the bed-side.

“Charles—dear Charles, are you worse?”

“No, darling, but I was dreaming of all the suffering you had endured for me, and it awakened me.”

“Go to sleep again, and dream of all the happiness your love has given me.”

“Nay, Cora, I fear the sorrow has been greater than the happiness.”

“Not so, Charles ; but I, too, was dreaming. I dreamed of the kind lady who visited us yesterday.”

"She is here now," interposed Alice.

Mrs. Walton turned, and seeing Annie, who had just risen from her chair, she apologized to her for not having observed her.

Annie replied,—

"No apology is needed. I felt anxious to know how your husband did this morning, and preferred calling myself, to sending."

"Oh, he is better, much better, thanks to your beneficence and kindness. I can never sufficiently express my gratitude. You saved my husband from death, and me from despair."

"Let us not think of that now; is there any thing more I can do for you?"

"You are too kind; how few of the gay and happy think of the unfortunate. I trust Charles will soon be well, and then we will not need assistance."

"In the meantime you will oblige me by taking this purse," putting in Cora's hand a purse containing fifty dollars, "and providing every thing that will contribute to your husband's comfort."

"I will accept your kind offer for Charles' sake. The poor can be proud when in health; but sickness bows the spirit, and makes us humble. Ah, little did I once deem that I should become the recipient of charity."

"We none of us know what changes are before us. But when misfortunes come, let us bear them with patient resignation. It will lessen the evil."

"Ah, lady, your kind words are balm to a bruised spirit. Your presence is a ray of sunlight to my heart, dispelling the dark clouds of despair that were settling round it."

"With your permission, I will call frequently, until your husband shall have recovered his health; for I can imagine how your heart yearns for a friend when oppressed with sorrow. But life for me has never had a cloud."

"And it never will, if the prayers of a grateful heart can avert them."

Annie bid her good morning, and Cora's heart beat more

lightly in her bosom than it had done for weeks. She felt, she knew not why, that fortune was about to smile more propitiously on her than it had done since her marriage. During the convalescence of her husband, Annie visited her frequently, and learned something of their history.

One day they were conversing on various topics, when Cora said to Anna,—

"I have no doubt, Miss Grayson, but you have wondered what circumstance has placed me in a position so different from that in which I was educated."

"I have sometimes thought of it."

"It was marriage against my father's wishes."

"It is not possible, Mrs. Walton, that you could disobey your parents in such an important step as marriage. It was a grave fault, but you have suffered severely."

"Listen to the circumstances, and then you will not blame me so much. Charles and I had learned to love each other, but he being a clerk in my father's store, the words of love had never been spoken between us. My father, who thought wealth would give happiness, accepted the proposition of a man nearly as old as himself, who wished to wed his daughter. This man had no quality to recommend him but his wealth. When my father proposed him to me for a husband, I begged him not to think of such a thing. He said I must take the husband he had provided for me, or leave the house forever. I preferred being turned from the home of my childhood, to becoming the wife of a man I abhorred, even if I had not loved another.

"I left a luxurious home, and became, as it were, an outcast, almost penniless, in the streets of New York. My mother had a purse containing a few dollars, this she managed to slip in my hand, unperceived by my father, with a whispered word of encouragement. I went to a kind old lady who had been employed as seamstress in our family, for years. She received me kindly, telling me I was welcome to share her home, as if I were her own child.

"I had been there but a few days, when Charles having heard of my being driven from my father's house, and the cause, called

to see me. He now told his love, and asked me to become his wife.

"I knew not what to do. My father had forbidden my mother or sister to speak to me. I could not return to my childhood's home, unless I would consent to accept the husband selected by my father. Thus unprotected and homeless, can you wonder that I became the wife of one I loved, and who is worthy the love of the noblest heart. We were married, and as my father did not permit the name of his self-willed daughter to be mentioned in his presence, we hoped our marriage might remain unknown to him, and Charles be permitted to retain his place, which yielded him a salary sufficient to support a wife comfortably, though not luxuriously.

"We had been married about a month, when one day a friend came into the store and asked Charles about his wife. My father happened to be present, and heard him; turning to Charles, he said :

" 'Ha, Charley married ! You should have told me this, and I would have increased your salary ; your faithful services merit it, and now that you have a wife to support, you will need it.'

" 'I did not wish to trouble you with my affairs,' said Charles, fearing that he might inquire too closely about his wife.

" 'Why ! You know, Charley, I always took a warm interest in you. I hope you have a wife worthy of you ?'

" 'I only wish I may be able to make her as happy as she deserves to be.'

" 'You are a noble fellow, Charley, and worthy any woman's love. From this time forth I will add two hundred dollars to your salary.'

"When Charles returned from the store that evening, and told me of this conversation, I felt anxious and uneasy. I knew, although my father esteemed him very much, and wished to advance his interest, the moment he knew to whom he was married, he would be indignant, and dismiss him from his employ instead of increasing his salary. Such was the result. And sooner than I anticipated, for Charles returned at noon the next

day with a troubled look. To my inquiry as to the cause, he replied :

“ ‘Your father met me this morning with a kinder manner than usual, said he was glad I was married, and asked me the happy lady’s name. I hesitated to reply.’

“ ‘Tut, tut ; you are not ashamed to name her, I hope ?’

“ ‘I replied, I am not ; but it is a name you have forbidden to be mentioned in your presence.’

“ ‘Not my daughter ?’ said he.

“ ‘I answered it was ; and in a moment his whole manner changed. He became furious, ordered me to quit his presence, and added, ‘I will prevent you from obtaining employment in the city.’

“ Charles had at that time about five hundred dollars—this would support us but a short time : what to do we scarcely knew. Oh, what would I have given at that time to have the privilege of consulting my mother ! Her feelings were with us. I dared not write to her, for my father had forbidden her to receive a letter or message from me. The next morning, under the pretence of making calls, she ordered the carriage and came to see me. She told us we would better leave the city. She advised us to come to Washington, and she would write a letter to a member of the cabinet, who was a cousin of hers, and endeavor to procure for Charles a situation in one of the departments. She wrote the letter, and we immediately left New York.

“ When we arrived in this city, Charles delivered the letter to the Secretary to whom it was addressed. He received him kindly, told him he would be very happy to oblige him, but just at this time he could not do anything for him, but would be able to give him a situation in a few weeks. Weeks, ay, months, slipped by, Charles was still unprovided for, but still fair promises prevented him from seeking any other situation. At length our money was almost exhausted, and we must do something : we could wait no longer for the fulfilment of the promise that had so long mocked the ear. Want was almost upon us, and Charles must take any situation that offered. He became salesman in a dry-goods store, at a very low salary. Our money

was so nearly exhausted we were glad to accept anything. Did those having the bestowal of offices know the injury applicants sustain by waiting thus upon their will, they would give a decisive answer at once—yes or no. It would save much anxiety and loss of time.

"When Charles entered upon the duties of his place, and we knew just what we had to depend upon, we at once reduced our mode of living to our means. We rented the room we now occupy, furnished it plainly, and blessed with health and each other's love, we were happy. But we were not destined to remain so. I was attacked with a violent fit of illness; we were obliged to incur expenses that involved us in debt. Charles' employer, who was a hard man, would not advance one cent till it was earned. We had just paid the debt incurred during my illness, when Charles was taken sick. Knowing the disposition of his employer, I dared not apply to him; and, had it not been for your kindness, God only knows what would have been our fate."

"I trust," said Annie, "your trials are now past; I will get my father to interest himself, and get a situation in one of the departments for your husband."

"No, no," said Charles, who had just come into the room and heard Annie's offer, "I thank you, Miss Grayson, for your kind offer, but I can never consent to wait upon the will of those having the appointing power again. Besides, I am sure such a situation would not suit me, because the faithful performance of my duty is no security that I will be retained. I have served an apprenticeship, as it were, to the mercantile business. It is my ambition to become a merchant, and if I could get a situation in the store of a liberal, high-minded man, that would just suit me."

"I think I can assist you in this, I trade with such a merchant. I know more than one merchant who, from being clerks in his store, were enabled by his advice and assistance to engage in business for themselves, and are now prosperous and respected."

"Could you assist me in procuring such a place, you would add a very great favor to the many already conferred."

Annie's words were not a mere promise, but so warmly did

she interest herself, that when Charles' health was perfectly restored, she had procured him a situation in Claggett's store, and so well pleased was his new employer with his capacity for and his attention to business, that he gave him a high salary, and entrusted to him the management of the most important transactions.

Since that time, fortune has smiled upon him ; and now he often laughingly tells his friends he is thankful for the disappointment that met him when he first came to Washington. It made him independent, and he now has no fears of a change of administration, least he should lose his means of support.

CHAPTER VII.

MANŒUVERING OF A WASHINGTON BELLE.

WASHINGTON is thronged with strangers. The grave statesman, the wily politician, the pleasure-seeking man of wealth—all are here. The season is an unusually gay one. The most beautiful and accomplished ladies from all parts of the Union, grace with their presence the Federal City, and the resident beauties vie with the strangers, who shall attach to themselves the greatest number of distinguished admirers. Foremost among these was Clementina Wilkie. It is the week previous to the first assembly of the season, and the fairer portion of the *beau monde* are as busy and as much puzzled in making a proper selection of ribbons, laces, and jewels to adorn their fair persons, as politicians are, in plotting and counter-plotting, previous to nominating a candidate for the Presidency.

The beauty says, much depends on the impression I make at the commencement of the season, whether I shall be a brilliant star in the firmament of fashion, during the winter.

The politician says, should I commit myself to the support of some one who will not receive the nomination, it will be a fatal blunder. In that case there will be no prospect for me, of a seat in the cabinet, or a mission abroad.

Oh, Washington is a miniature world in itself. You may here see vanity, pride, ambition, avarice, and every passion that animates the human bosom, exhibited in all their phases. However, I do not intend to generalize, but to speak of individuals.

It is one of those pleasant sunny days which are so frequent

in this climate during winter. Clementina Wilkie is seated in the luxurious drawing-room of her aunt, book in hand, seemingly absorbed in the perusal of its pages, but in reality she is planning how she shall render herself the most conspicuous belle of the season. In the midst of her reverie, she was aroused by the entrance of her aunt, who said :

"Come, Clementina, don't sit here dreaming this lovely day, when everybody is out."

"What do I care for the common crowd!" said the ambitious beauty.

"True enough ; but Imogen Delacroix is in the city, and you must call on her."

"I do not think I shall ; we were never particular friends when at school."

"But she spends the winter with the family of the Senator from Louisiana. That, with her immense wealth, will give her a distinguished position in society, and it is policy to seek her friendship."

"Policy, how I hate the word."

"Nevertheless we must practice it. Wealth alone will not give us the position you covet."

"How humiliating to be obliged to court the society of those, whom I would fain trample under my feet. But order the carriage, I will accompany you."

The call was made, and Imogen, who was the same impulsive creature that she had been when a school girl, after the first greetings were over, exclaimed :

"How beautiful you are, Clementina, I am not surprised that Fred Leroux, who is such an admirer of beauty, is in raptures when he speaks of you."

"Did you know Mr. Leroux, in Louisiana?"

"Our plantations join, and many a play have we had together at the grand old place during the life time of his mother. My own mother died when I was very young. Mrs. Leroux, who was an angel of kindness, took me to her own splendid home, and was a mother to me until I was sent to Georgetown to the Academy, where I first knew you. And I spent the vacations

with her till her death. I loved Fred as dearly as if he were a brother."

"Perhaps he is dearer than a brother," said Clementina, noting closely the countenance of Imogen.

"Oh no, Fred would never think of making love to me, I am not sufficiently beautiful to satisfy his fastidious taste. And as for me, I have been so long in the habit of regarding him as a brother, it would be impossible for any other feeling to find a place in my heart."

"Have you seen your old friends, Annie Grayson, Emma Carlton, and Ella Stanmore?"

"Oh yes, I did not use any ceremony with them, I sent them my card immediately, but as you and I were not so intimate when at school, I did not take that liberty with you."

"Well, I trust in future you will regard me with the same friendly feeling, that you entertain for them."

"It is in my nature to love all with whom I associate. But from what I had heard of you, I was under the impression, that you could not stoop to interest yourself in any but persons of the highest order of intellect. I have heard you spoken of, as the most intellectual lady in Washington, and that our most distinguished statesman thought it an honor to cultivate your acquaintance. But here you are chatting to me, just like any other young girl."

"Yes, and enjoy your society more than I do that of those distinguished persons."

Clementina had an object to accomplish, in seeking the friendship of Imogen. With her boundless ambition and utter selfishness, the most passionate love for Frederick Leroux, had taken possession of her heart. She read at a glance the frank and artless character of Imogen, and learning the early friendship that existed between her and Fred, she thought she might use Imogen to further her designs. She felt that, with all her power of fascinating him when in her society, that she had no hold on his heart.

After having made an unusually long and social call, she rose

to depart, saying to Imogen, she expected to meet her at the assembly. To which Imogen replied :

"Oh, yes, I shall enjoy the gayeties of the city this winter, with the zest of a school-girl fresh from the country. And as I am heart-whole and fancy free, I shall watch the flirtations, which they say is carried on to a great extent in Washington society, with much interest."

"And be caught in the meantime yourself."

"Of course, provided I, with my want of beauty, can attract some one sufficiently to induce them to play the agreeable to me."

When they returned home, Mrs. Parkinson said to her niece :

"You seemed much pleased with your old schoolmate."

"She is a card I can use to advantage."

"So I thought, or I would not have asked you to call. And as we are just winning our way to the highest circles of society, it is well to use every means to give ourselves a firm footing in that society. Your beauty and accomplishments, with my wealth, will do much, but it requires great tact to attain complete success."

"Yes, but what has been done by others, can be done by us. Just let me manage it. Give superb dinners, and select parties. Give them often, but do not invite too many at once. Have no more than you can have attended to with comfort. If you would win favor by pampering the palate, and gratifying the appetite of persons, you must do it in a manner to enable them to enjoy your fine wines and delicious viands, without feeling incommoded or crowded. And besides, if a great number is invited, they feel that no honor is conferred—they are only one of a crowd. I have studied well the human heart, and know its weaknesses."

"Well, you can have the command of my purse and house this winter, and you would better begin by making an elegant appearance at the assembly."

"I will not neglect to do so."

The conversation of this scheming pair was here interrupted by company, and among the visitors were Annie Grayson and her cousin. During the conversation, Clementina alluded to her visit to Imogen, expressing much admiration of her amiability.

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"Ah, yes," said Frederick, "she is one who will win the friendship of all who know her, she is so unselfish and single-hearted."

"That seems to be the most striking trait of her character."

"It is; and I shall take much pleasure in noting the impressions city life makes upon her. Hitherto, when not at school, her life has been spent in the country."

"I shall take pleasure in initiating her in city life."

"I will do that myself, and will commence by waiting on her to the assembly."

The evening of the assembly arrived. The spacious hall was filled with beauty and talent. The representatives of foreign nations were there glittering with jewels. But at one side of the room engaged in conversation, is the Marquis B——, the nephew of the French minister, Frederick Leroux, Imogen and Clementina.

"Angelic! Beautiful! Lovely!" burst from the lips of the Marquis.

"What is it, that has called forth such enthusiastic admiration?" said Frederick.

"See that beautiful girl. Can you tell me who she is?"

Looking in the direction indicated, he saw his cousin standing a short distance from him.

"That is my cousin, Miss Grayson."

"I have heard my aunt speak of her; I should be happy to know her."

"I will take the liberty of presenting you, if you wish it."

"Who would not wish to be presented to such a vision of loveliness?"

He was presented, and ere the evening closed, he had drunk deep draughts of love. Her voice thrilled his being, vibrating on his heart-strings like a strain of sweet music.

Ella Stanmore, too, was there with her pure loving heart and her dove-like eyes. It was not often she was seen in society. Her brother, when he went west, had wished her not to mingle in gayeties of Washington society. But Mr. Belmont had arrived in the city a few days previous, and insisted she should

accompany him. Mrs. Stanmore had consented with reluctance to her going. Ella had never looked more lovely. This was the first time Clementina had seen her in company with Fred Leroux since Annie's party. She watched her with a jealous eye. Towards the close of the evening, when Fred was dancing with Ella, Imogen came near Clementina, saying :

"I never knew Ella was so beautiful; her whole appearance is changed by the music and excitement. And with what grace she moves through the dance! I had always thought of her as one too pure, too good, to mingle in such scenes, but it adds to her beauty. See what a rich glow is on her cheek, how her eyes beam with pleasure! I think Fred had discovered she is beautiful, from the look of admiration with which he regards her."

Had Imogen observed the look of dark malignity that passed over the face of Clementina, at this remark, she would have trembled for her friend.

The evening passed rapidly by, as is ever the case, when music and dancing call forth the joyous emotions of young hearts.

Imogen had unwittingly roused the demon in the bosom of Clementina, and she vowed in her own heart, that if the love of Fred should be given to Ella, she would come between her and the happiness of attaining his hand.

"No, no," said she in the silence of her own chamber, "if I cannot win him myself, she shall never be the mistress of his bright southern home. I know every weakness of his heart, and I can prevent him from making her his bride. But I will let the poor child drink draughts of love till his smile is necessary to her existence, and then I will dash the cup of happiness from her lips, even if it caused her heart-strings to break, and cast a shadow on his life. But I must be wary, none must suspect the proud Clementina stooped to bestow her love where it was not returned. Yes, he loves *her*. Every glance of his eye denotes it, and his voice, when speaking to her, has a gentler cadence, a tenderer tone. 'Tis strange what he can see in her, to attract him. Well, he will never wed her. If my disappointment is bitter, my revenge will be sweet. Ha, ha, she dare to come between me and happiness! We will see."

True enough, Clementina could not see what attracted him, for she could not appreciate Ella's pure, truthful heart. With all her deep knowledge of human nature, she had yet to learn that it requires heart to call up the purer, better emotions of man's nature. Grace, beauty, intellect, accomplishments, will excite his admiration, interest his mind; and when he wishes a companion for an evening, or to while away a leisure hour when time lags, he will seek such; but when he wants a companion for life, he will seek a true heart and gentle nature—not one whose whole soul is absorbed in a round of dissipation and gayety, and whose sole desire is to be the leading star in these scenes. It is not such as these that make the happiness of the domestic circle, though they shed a brilliance on society.

Ella was seldom seen in society; but often would Fred, when wearied with the excitement and heartlessness of the gay world, spend a quiet evening in the unpretending home of Mrs. Stanmore. And the earnest, truthful nature of Ella, contrasted with the sparkling wit and showy acquirements of Clementina, caused him to enshrine her in his bosom as the bright dream of his life.

Often, too, did he meet there a few friends, and enjoy that interchange of sentiment which gives a real charm to life. The false glitter and desire for display, which characterize crowded assemblies and fashionable parties, were not found. The votaries of fashion did not condescend to visit this mansion. Still, none but the refined and intellectual were met here, and impressions were made on more than one heart that gave a tinge to their future destiny. Yes, even in Washington, where, to the stranger and superficial observer, all seems glitter and false show, there are homes to be found where intellect, refinement, and all the accomplishments that beautify and polish life, are united with heart and home home virtues.

CHAPTER VIII.

A HOME-SCENE.

A BRIGHT coal fire is burning cheerfully in the grate of Mrs. Stanmore's neat and comfortable parlor. The shutters are closed, the curtains drawn, and an air of quiet comfort pervades the room. Ella is seated beside the centre-table looking over some beautiful engravings, whilst Mrs. Stanmore and Charles Belmont are engaged in conversation in another part of the room.

"Let me take a superbly furnished house, as I intend remaining this winter in the city. I wish to see Ella enjoying all the advantages that wealth can give. I would like to see her the belle of every party."

"No, Charles, Ella is happy. She does not desire to be conspicuous ; her happiness consists in the quiet enjoyment of the society of friends who love her. Her happiness is derived from the affections. And besides, I could never consent to mingle again in the gay world : I have fully tested it."

"As you please, Mrs. Stanmore ; it was only for Ella's sake I proposed it. I am sure I enjoy the society of those few friends who assemble here occasionally, without any ceremony, far more than I would the most brilliant parties."

"Yes, I too ; because I know they visit us because they love us."

"And I fear I shall learn to love some of them too much for my quiet. A pair of dark eyes haunt me strangely, and a soft voice makes sweet music in my heart."

"Ah, Annie Grayson ?"

"Not she."

"It is well; for her mother is a vain, haughty woman, and she would have Annie wed the Marquis B——, who is evidently devoted to her."

"Yes, but Annie's heart is not his. I noted her closely the last evening they spent here. She loves him not."

"He is all that would captivate a young girl. He has rank and title, joined with a fine person, graceful manners, and a brow which bears the impress of his noble soul."

"And yet she loves him not."

"The human heart is a strange thing."

"That is true, as I can well testify. For in my youth I was so absorbed in making money, that love never stirred my bosom; but now, that I have grown to be almost an old man, a fair girl, fifteen years younger than myself, interests me much, and the sound of her voice makes my heart bound with an emotion it never knew before."

"Well, woo and win this maiden to be your own."

"What, I win Emma Carlton, the gifted, the beautiful? No, no, that cannot be. My mission shall be to watch over Ella's happiness, and that of my own sweet sister. The time is past for me to indulge in love dreams; but if I can contribute to the happiness of you and yours, that will be a pleasure."

"Why not win Emma? she is a noble girl; and although when in society she seems one of the giddy thoughtless butterflies of fashion, she has a true heart. I have seen her in the wretched abodes of poverty, holding the cooling draught to the parched lips, and bathing the fevered brow of the lowly mother; and when she had attended to her, she would soothe with some sweet song the restless, fretful babe, that the wearied mother might obtain some repose. Although she has not money to dispense with liberal hand, like Annie Grayson, still, she is looked upon by many poor families as an angel of mercy. She will be a blessing and a joy to him who wins her love."

"Tis not for me. But I will spend one winter in Washington, mingle in its excitements, and give my spirit to its pleasures, and then return to my Southern home, where business will rouse my

spirit from unrealized dreams. I have been a wanderer so long, I cannot be content to remain long in one place."

Whilst they were thus conversing, Emma, her mother, Annie Grayson, and some other friends, came in to spend a social evening. After being seated, Annie said :

"Dear Mrs. Stanmore, you know, when we are weary of frivolity and gayety, we come to spend an evening with you. There is something in the atmosphere of your home that calls up the purer, better feelings of our natures. Emma sings more sweetly ; I feel a truer appreciation of life ; and even the grave Mr. Belmont unbends from his dignity, and tells us of scenes and incidents of the sunny South, that makes me wish to see that country."

"Then, let us make up a party," said Charles Belmont, "and visit it."

"Not now, at some future time."

"Never put off for the future : we know not what changes a year may make."

"None, I trust, in this dear circle of friends, save an increase of happiness."

"Enjoy the present," said Mrs. Stanmore ; "the future is in the hands of the all-merciful disposer of events, and should it bring sorrow to any heart, he will, I trust, enable us to bear it. We cannot always expect a cloudless sky ; but let us enjoy the sunshine while it lasts."

Conversing thus, an hour passed by, when Mrs. Stanmore turned to Annie, saying :

"I have an additional inducement to draw you to my hearth stone. Charles has a fine Spanish guitar, and he sings equal to any Spanish lover."

"Nay, Mrs. Stanmore, your kindness would invest me with accomplishments I do not possess. I brought the guitar for Ella. Music is to me one of life's best gifts. It makes the heart more joyous in its hours of mirth, and it soothes it when oppressed with sorrow. I have deeply felt its influence. And Miss Carlton must try Ella's guitar, and give us one of her own songs."

"I will, provided you will favor us with a song afterward."

"It shall be done, although wanting the inspiration with which you are gifted."

"What shall be the theme?"

"Select it yourself."

Taking the guitar, she ran her fingers over its strings, and drew from it a soft, sweet strain of music, and then sang :

A maiden with heart as light as the breeze,
That tosses her golden hair,
Is sitting beneath a rustic porch,
And singing a quaint old air.

Oh, yes, her spirit is glad and gay,
For its depths have ne'er been stirred
By a dream of love, or a pang of grief,
And she singeth as blithe as a bird.

A year hath passed, and now behold
That maiden young and fair,
'Neath a star-lit sky upon that porch,
And another form is there.

And words of deep and lasting love
Are whispered in her ear,
But they're whispered by a faithless tongue;
Oh, maiden beware, beware.

Another year has quickly sped,
We'll look on that scene again;
Ah, wending now from that rustic porch,
Is a mournful funeral train.

The love of that pure and gentle girl,
To a faithless lover was given,
Though she murmured not, her heart-strings broke,
And her spirit found peace in Heaven.

"Why, Emma," said Annie, "what put such a sad strain into your head? We wanted something gay."

"I cannot tell you, Annie, what put it into my head, but I took the guitar into my hand, determining to sing the first thing that occurred to me, and that is it."

"Were I superstitious, I should think it boded some of us evil."

* * * * *

Ere a year had passed, the thought of Emma's song crossed more than one heart with a feeling that it had been prophetic.

For the voice of one of those friends was hushed. She, that was the gentlest and dearest, no longer formed one of that circle. A love tale had been whispered, waking echoes of sweet music in her heart. Nor was it whispered by a faithless lover; but the wiles of an artful woman turned her joy to bitterness, and her heart-strings broke, leaving a shadow for life upon a heart. Yet, in the meantime, many happy hours were passed beneath the roof of Mrs. Stanmore; and in many a gay scene did the friends, together assembled this evening, mingle. With what pride did Mrs. Carlton behold the *entree* of her daughter into the most distinguished circles, and the admiration she elicited. But she was doomed to learn the value of these sunshine friends. And how bitter was the lesson. The winter sped brightly by. But with the spring came a severing of those friends whose hearts were so joined together. Fred Leroux, accompanied by Imogen and his cousin, visited his bright southern home. Charles Belmont went to the west. The Marquis B——, who had remained in Washington during the winter, took a tour through the Northern States, visiting the romantic scenery of the Hudson, and the beautiful St. Lawrence. Of all the pleasant group who were in the habit of meeting at Mrs. Stanmore's, none were left but Emma. The summer months passed quietly away. Emma and Ella, though obliged to remain in the city, derived much pleasure from the letters received from Annie. They were expecting her return, with happy hearts; the fashionables were returning to the almost deserted city, and Mrs. Carlton was anticipating the pleasure of a second gay winter, when her bright hopes were dashed to earth, by the sudden death of her husband.

He was ill but a few days, yet, from the beginning of his illness, he felt he should die. The thought of leaving his helpless family, gave death its sharpest pang. But he knew Emma's strength of character, and just before his death, he called his daughter to him, and deeply regretting the false pride that had induced him to live up to the extent of his salary, he said:

"But, my darling child, I depend upon you, to sustain your mother under this heavy affliction. The education you possess,

will enable you to procure a support. Little did I think, when I was so proud of your talents and acquirements, that you would be obliged to use them to earn a support. But a trust in God will enable you to endure the trials he sends."

Having said this he sank exhausted on his pillow, and death soon released him.

Friends came to offer comfort and assistance. The funeral services were conducted in a style befitting the circle in which he had moved when in life. He was followed to his last resting place, by a train of carriages filled with genteel friends, but the use of these carriages had to be paid for by the widow and orphan, adding a considerable item to the already heavy expenses incurred. Yet the carriages must be provided, or it will show a want of respect to the memory of the deceased. The funeral is over. The friends retire to their respective homes, leaving the bereaved ones to loneliness and sorrow.

Mrs. Carlton seemed to have yielded to despair. She retired to her own room, threw herself on her bed, and gave way to a violent fit of weeping, exclaiming :

"Oh, Heaven! what will become of us, no prospect, no hope for the future, all is darkness, wretchedness, poverty."

Poor Mrs. Carlton, there was indeed no hope for her. She had given her whole soul to worldly pleasure, and now in a moment as it were, it had been snatched from her grasp. Dark indeed was the future to her.

Not so with Emma; although she had shone conspicuous in the world of fashion, in her heart there was a living principle of piety, and now in the hour of her sorrow and trial, she felt, that He who careth for the sparrows, would not forsake her. She turned her thoughts to the future sadly, but calmly. She, too, retired to her room, not to give way to a paroxysm of grief, but to collect her thoughts, and raise her voice to God in its quietude and stillness. Throwing herself upon her knees, she communed with her own spirit, and with her Heavenly father. She rose strengthened and comforted.

Poor child, she now turned her thoughts to making some arrangement for the coming winter. It is a dark autumnal eve.

The winds sigh mournfully through the streets and avenues. So absorbed is she in her own thoughts, that she notes not that it is growing dark, till the servant enters to know, if she would have the lamp lighted. Thus called from her sad reverie, she thought of Lelia, her only sister, a sweet child of about six summers. Looking round for her, she saw her sweetly sleeping on the sofa.

"Happy childhood," said she, "that cannot realize the deep bereavement we have sustained, and if my exertions can prevent it, she never shall realize it to its full extent."

Stooping, she kissed the fair brow of the child, and threw herself by her side, and ere she slept, she had determined on the course to be pursued. They had not even the money to pay the funeral expenses, but they owned the elegant furniture with which the house was furnished. This must be disposed of, the house must be given up, servants dismissed, and every expenditure lessened. The money, derived from the sale of the furniture, will, after paying the demands against them, support them until she can do something herself. Ah, what is this something to be done? That too, she had thought of. How rapidly the mind thinks when thrown upon its own resources. She would give music lessons, take as many pupils as she could attend to, giving them lessons at their own homes, as she would be obliged to sell her own instrument.

When she had thus, in her own mind, made these arrangements, she went to her mother's room, designing to tell her of her plans, thinking grief would weigh less heavily upon the heart, when the spirit is roused to action. When she went to her chamber, she found her asleep. Exhausted by the violence of her grief, she had sunk into a heavy slumber. As Emma looked upon her sorrow-stricken countenance, and tear-stained cheek, she felt thankful that she had found oblivion for a few short hours, and thought it would be cruel to awaken her. She, therefore, threw a covering over her, that she should not take cold, and placed a shaded lamp upon the hearth, that her mother might know when she did awake, that she had been there. Having done this, she returned to the parlor, took Lelia from the sofa, and sought her own pillow. Through the lone watches of this

weary night, did Emma learn the true worth of her religious faith. The next morning she rose with a resigned, if not a cheerful countenance. She went immediately to her mother's room, and found her just awake. To her inquiry of how she felt, she replied :

"Perfectly wretched, my heart is utterly crushed : what are we to do ?"

"I have thought it all over, dear mother ; rise and take some breakfast, and then I will tell you my plans, and if you approve them, we will put them immediately into execution."

"If you can collect your thoughts sufficiently to form any thing like a definite plan, pray act upon it, for my brain is so distracted I cannot think."

When they had taken their breakfast, Emma told her mother her plans, to which she listened abstractedly, and when she had finished, she said :

"I suppose, necessity will oblige us to pursue that course, but 'tis too bad, that you, who were such an ornament to society, should be obliged to earn your own bread. I wish Hannah Wilmer and her husband were here, they would assist us."

"But as they are not, we must think and act for ourselves."

For a few days, friends called with the pretence of offering advice and comfort, but in reality to learn what they designed to do, as the following remarks, of a lady who had just returned from visiting them, and who had been profuse in her expressions of sympathy, will prove.

"I presume, that vain Mrs. Carlton will not cut such a figure this winter as she did last. That paragon of a daughter of hers, instead of flourishing at parties, this winter, will have to earn her bread. It is astonishing how people who are dependent upon a pitiful salary, will attempt to maintain a position in the higher circles. But they generally pay for their folly, as in this instance. I must say, I am not sorry for them."

The lady who made this remark, had three marriageable daughters, all very plain-looking, and not remarkable for mental attainments or graceful accomplishments. Their father had considerable wealth, but as he had a large family of children, his

daughters were not considered worth sufficient property to make them objects of matrimonial speculation; and notwithstanding the expensive jewelry with which they decked their persons, and the constant manœuvring of their mamma to make them conspicuous, they had never created much sensation in society. Therefore she felt gratified that Emma, who, the preceding winter, had been such a brilliant star in the world of fashion, should now be obliged to labor for her support.

Winter was near at hand. Annie Grayson had not yet returned to the city. Emma had disposed of their furniture, settled in an humble house which contained only two rooms, but these were comfortably and plainly furnished. When this was done, Emma gave notice, through the columns of the several papers published in the city, that she would give music lessons to a few pupils, with a request that those requiring her service would address her through the post-office. She did not doubt but she would obtain any number of pupils, as her musical performances had been so much admired, and she knew not, that the very act of being obliged to use those talents, would, in the estimation of many, depreciate them. Poor child! she was destined to learn a new chapter in life. Hitherto, she had only walked in its pleasant paths; but now, she must experience the pressure of poverty and the mortification of cold neglect from those who, in her happier days, were solicitous of cultivating her friendship. But nobly did she pass through the ordeal.

CHAPTER IX.

A NEW CHARACTER.

It is a dark, chilly, November day. The rain patters on the roof. The avenue, which, at this season of the year, when members of congress with their families are daily arriving, is usually thronged, has no one on its side-walks to-day, save those whose business and occupations are such that they are obliged to go forth, notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather. The day is dark and cheerless, causing a deeper shade of care to settle on the brow of the poor widow, who is obliged to support the fatherless little ones who nestle around her by the use of her needle. There are many such here: God help them! The near approach of winter fills the heart of the widow with sad forebodings, as she calculates the increased expenditures she will be obliged to make for fuel and lights. For the shortness of the winter days, and her increased expenses, will oblige her to toil beyond the midnight hour, or her little ones may not have bread. Whilst the widow's eye grows dim with the scarcely repressed tear-drop, that of the wealthy fashionable sparkles with delight at the anticipated pleasures of the coming gay season. To this class belong Clementina and Mrs. Parkinson, as seated in their luxuriously furnished parlor, they are planning how they shall surprise their friends by the increased elegance of their entertainments the ensuing winter.

While thus occupied, a servant brings in the letters brought by the morning's mail. Clementina took them in her hand, and looking over the addresses to see from whence they came, she said, as her eye rested for a moment on each:

"Here is one from Louisiana, that's from Imogen. One from New York; this is from Mrs. T., the wife of the Senator; but who in creation is this from?" exclaimed she, as her eye rested on a coarse, soiled bit of paper, folded somewhat after the fashion of a child's thumb-paper, upon which was scrawled, in an almost illegible hand, "Misses Clementina Wilkie."

"Where is it from?" asked her aunt.

Looking at the post-mark, which she with some difficulty deciphered, for it seemed that the post-master was less proficient in the art of writing than her correspondent. Finally she succeeded in making out the name, and told her aunt it was "Owl Thicket post-office, Illinois."

"Well, I do declare; who could have written it?"

"I really cannot imagine."

"Do open it, and let us see."

Clementina opened it, and, turning to the signature, read aloud to her aunt, "Jenny Lumpkin."

"Jenny Lumpkin," repeated Mrs. Parkinson, "who can she be, and how came she to write to you?"

"Don't you remember, aunt, that after you were married and came to Washington, your sister Betsy was married to Dave Lumpkin?"

"Certainly, I remember that."

"Well, Jenny is her oldest daughter."

"Do read the letter, and let us hear how they are; Betsy's my sister, if she is a poor woman."

Clementina commenced reading, and as she proceeded, her brow grew dark with displeasure. When she had concluded, she threw down the letter, exclaiming:

"Horrible! oh, horrible!"

"What is the matter? Is Betsy dead?"

"No, worse than that."

"What is it?"

"Why, Jenny is coming to spend the winter with us, and she'll be here in a few days."

"You frightened me; I'm sure that's not worse than Betsy's death."

"Just read that letter, and I guess you'll think so."

Mrs. Parkinson took the letter, and read the following original production :

"MY DEAR COUSIN,—

"I hadn't hearn from yu for sich a long time, that I had a'most furgot yu ; but when Misses Stricklin, the wife of our congress member, came from Washington last spring, she told us how purty yu wus, and what sights of sweethearts yu had. I told mammy I was bound to go to Washington, to visit Aunt Parkinson, too, to see if I could not get lots of sweethearts, as well as yu. Yu know when we were both little gals, I was reckoned purtier than yu.

"Mammy and daddy both agreed I might go, if Missess Stricklin was willin' to let me go along with her. Well, I posted strate over to see her, and ax her if I might go. She told me, sartainly, that she would be very glad to obleege me. And well she might, for it was owing to daddy's 'lectioneering so strong for her husband, that she got to Washington herself. You see, daddy bein' an old residerter in these parts, he's a powerful favorite with the nabors, and he got 'em all to vote for Mr. Stricklin ; and it was the strong vote of Owl Thicket settlement that decided the 'lection in his favor.

"Now, I've hearn folks say, that some of these congressmen, who are so friendly and sociable at home when they want the people to vote for 'em, when they get to Washington, they are so stuck up that if they should meet one of these same men that they are so gracious with at home, they would hardly shake hands with them on the Avenue. I know Mr. Stricklin ain't one of them kind.

"Mammy says as how she reckons Aunt Lucy would like to know how we come on. Well, we are rather poor yet, but I think, now that Bill and Jo are able to do almost a man's work, we will begin to pick up, and get better off. However, for all we ain't rich, I've got a power of money to git finery with, when I get to Washington, and I'll tell you how I got it. Last spring, when daddy told mammy I might come to see you, if we could

raise the money to fetch me, you see daddy never makes any money himself, because he is a politicianer, and ain't fond of work, but spends his time talking pollyticks. Well, mammy told me I might have all the money I could save from marketing, after paying for the tea and coffee. Besides this, she give me all the money I could earn by weaving; most all the neighbors have to hire their weaving done, because they have no looms. Well, here was a great chance, and to work I went, and I made every edge cut, I tell you. And I'll tell you, I managed. In the first place, when I made the coffee for breakfast I put in one spoonful less than I had been doing; so, by this means, I made a pound of coffee last as long as possible. In the next place, instead of giving them the rich cream for their coffee, I gave them new milk; so I could make more butter to sell. Bill and Jo grumbled enough about it, but I did not mind them. I was getting along finely, laying up money fast; but now comes bad luck. In the midst of harvest, poor Crumple dies; now Crump was the very best butter cow we had. Bill and Jo said it was a judgement on me for my meanness about their coffee; that now I would not be able to save money enough to go Washington, and they were glad of it. But I tell you, I'm not a gal to give up and cry 'over spilt milk' or the milk of a dead cow either. So, instead of being down hearted, I worked the harder, weaving eight yards a day instead of six; what I lost in marketing I gained in weaving. That's the way to git along in this world; when one string breaks pull another. Never fear I'll 'hoe my row' through the world. My expenses in coming, won't be anything, for I'm going to nuss Mrs. Stricklin's baby on the way; so she won't have to hire a nuss, and she's going to pay my expenses, and I'll have the whole of my money to spend. Won't thirty dollars git lots of finery? But I'll just finish my letter, as I'll be there nearly as soon as it, but I thought I'd write to let you know I was coming.

"Your loving cousin,

"JENNY LUMPKIN."

"*Nota Bene.*—Since I finished my letter I've seed Mrs. Stricklin, and she says may be Aunt Lucy don't want me to come to

see her, being I'm a plain country gal, and she's so fashionable. Well, I told Mrs. Stricklin I was bound to go any how, and if aunt didn't want to see me, I would nuss for her; so I'll stop at the tavern with Mrs. Stricklin, till I know whether aunt wants to see me.

"J. L."

When Mrs. Parkinson had finished reading this letter, she looked at Clementina with blank amaze for some time, and then said in a troubled voice:

"Well, what are we to do?"

"That is more than I can tell," replied her amiable niece. "But I wish all their cows had died as well as Crumply, and herself into the bargain, before she thought of coming here."

"Yes, but as she is coming, something must be done. It won't do to let her remain as nurse with Mrs. Stricklin, and have persons remarking: 'There's the cousin of the accomplished Clementina Wilkie.' I suppose we will be obliged to bring her home, and keep her out of sight as much as possible."

"Judging from her letter, I am inclined to think that will not be easily done; she seems to have a pretty good opinion of herself, and an independent spirit. She is coming to participate in city gayeties, and make conquests; therefore, it is not likely she will consent to have her beauties kept out of sight."

"When we see her, we will then determine what course to pursue."

"I wish these congressmen were not so much afraid of their constituents at home, and then Mrs. Stricklin would not have brought her."

Clementina was altogether mistaken, when she supposed Mrs. Stricklin had brought her Cousin Jenny to Washington, for fear of losing the vote of Owl Thicket settlement for her husband in the next election.

The true motive was to revenge herself on Clementina, for remarks made the previous winter. Mrs. Stricklin was one of those impulsive, warm-hearted, western ladies, who would not conform her deportment to the rule and plummet of the fashion-

able etiquette of Washington. Clementina had made the remark, which had been repeated to her, that she was surprised a gentleman of Mr. Stricklin's talents, should have permitted his wife, who was so ignorant of the usages of refined society, to accompany him to Washington. When it was told her, she replied :

"I will, next winter, bring a cousin of hers with me, that she may teach her refinement and the usages of good society."

It was to mortify Clementina, that she brought Jenny.

Two or three days after the reception of Jenny's letter by Miss Wilkie, Mrs. Stricklin arrived in the city, and stopped at Brown's Hotel. At Jenny's request, she sent a note to Mrs. Parkinson, informing that lady of her arrival. She had become so much attached to Jenny, that she was anxious to retain her as nurse, and hoped the proud aunt would not recognize her as a relative. But Mrs. Parkinson was too politic for that. The note had been dispatched but a short time, when a carriage was at the door of the hotel, with a request that her niece should come immediately to her aunt's mansion.

Jenny bade Mrs. Stricklin adieu with a sad heart, telling her she would come to see her often, and if she saw her aunt and cousin were not pleased with her, she would return, and stay with her until she returned home. When she arrived at her aunt's, it was near dark. As she looked round the richly-furnished room, and received the supercilious greeting of her cousin, and the scarcely kind one of her aunt, her heart grew heavy in her bosom, and when, at an early hour in the evening, she retired to her room, she exclaimed :

"What a fool I was to leave my own home, to visit relatives who are evidently sorry that I come. I am sure there is more heart-happiness in my own humble home, than here. I shall experience many a sad and weary hour ere I return. I left it in a spirit of gladness, thinking what a grand thing it would be to see something of the world, and already I am home-sick. But, as I am here, I'll make the best of it. Go to see the President, Senators, all the curiosities of the city; for, after all, it was a desire to see these, more than my relatives, that brought me. So, I

need not feel so much disappointed that they receive me coldly." Putting her hand in her pocket, to draw forth her handkerchief, to wipe a tear from her eye, that had unconsciously gathered there at the thought of home, her hand came in contact with the purse containing her hard-earned money. A smile passed over her face, as she remarked :

"How rich the contents of this purse made me feel when at home, and how much finery I thought it would buy, but here, when I look upon the rich dresses of my aunt and cousin, it seems like nothing, so after all, people are rich or poor by comparison. At home, this sum made me very rich, whilst here it is nothing. But I won't let that trouble me, for I can see and hear as well in a calico dress as silk, and I intend to make use of my ears."

She need have given herself no thought of her wardrobe, for she had scarcely left their presence, when Mrs. Parkinson began to consult Clementina, as to what she should purchase for her, to make her passable.

"Well, Clementina, what do you think of her?" was Mrs. Parkinson's first remark.

"She is not quite so outlandish as I feared she would be, from her letter, but she won't do to present to our friends."

"Of course not, if we can help it, but for fear she may insist on it, I will immediately furnish her wardrobe, becoming a niece of mine, who is in my house."

"I would not purchase anything very expensive, she is not used to it, and will not expect it; really, it would look out of place on her."

"I'll depend altogether on your judgment."

Whilst Clementina and Mrs. Parkinson were discussing the arrangement of her wardrobe, Jenny was sleeping sweetly, and dreaming of chasing the butterfly over the prairie, as she had often done in childhood's happy day.

When she awoke the next morning, she felt much refreshed, and possessing a naturally cheerful disposition, and buoyant spirit, the feeling of depression of the preceding evening had

passed away. She arose, made her toilet, and then after putting her room in order, she went down into the parlor, expecting to meet her aunt. Finding no one there, she examined the elegant furniture to her heart's content. When she tired of this, she threw herself on a sofa, and commenced singing in a loud but musical voice, the ballad of Barbara Allen. Whilst she was in the midst of her musical performance, Miss Wilkie entered. Jenny was so much engaged with her song, that she did not observe her entrance, and as a matter of course, continued her music. Clementina placed her hands on her ears, and gazed at her, with indignation the most intense depicted on her countenance. Regarding her thus a moment, she approached her, saying :

"You will be kind enough to cease your singing, it distracts my nerves."

"Nerves, well I declare now, if that aint too bad, to hear a young woman complaining of her nerves."

"I presume you are never troubled in that way?"

"No, indeed."

"Well in future you will be careful not to disturb every one in the house by your noise. If you cannot sleep yourself, you will remember others may like to take a morning's nap."

"Certainly I will ; if I've done wrong I'm very sorry. But I'm sure Barbara Allen is a mighty pretty song."

"It may be to your uncultivated taste, but to refined ears it is horrible." Saying this she left the room, she repeated the words, "refined ears," and when Jenny found herself alone, indulged in a hearty laugh at the recollection of Clementina's attitude and countenance when she first observed her.

About nine o'clock the breakfast bell rang, and Jenny met her aunt at the breakfast table. She spoke kindly to her, and told her she must endeavor to act like a lady and she should be dressed like one.

Clementina maintained a dignified silence during the meal ; and had it not been for the fear of giving pain to her aunt, whose few kind words had won her heart, she would, ere the close of

the day, have played some mischievous trick upon her stately cousin. For, although possessing a kind heart, she was as full of mischief as a light-hearted, mirth-loving girl could be. Could Clementina have foreseen the future, she would have treated Jenny with more kindness.

CHAPTER X.

LIFE'S CHANGES.

"WELL, Emma, two weeks have elapsed since you gave notice you would give instruction in music, and not a pupil yet. We shall perish this winter if we don't get something to do soon."

"Mother dear, don't get discouraged, keep a hopeful spirit. Our heavenly Father will not forsake us if we put our trust in Him. He watches over us in mercy and kindness."

"It is impossible for me to be patient. At first my pride revolted at the idea of your giving music lessons. Now, I would be thankful if you could get pupils. My pride is humbled by the fear of want."

"Those who are willing to exert themselves, will always find something to do. I will not wait any longer for pupils to come to me. I will this morning call on our acquaintances—friends we have none since our misfortunes—and tender my services in person. They, perhaps, do not even read the notice I have given."

Emma, as she proposed, called on several ladies whose daughters she thought might become pupils of hers, but in every instance she met with disappointment. Some thought no person could give instruction in music but a foreign teacher, whilst others could not endure the annoyance of having their children take lessons at home.

Wearied and dispirited, she thus communed with herself as she returned home: "How little do we know of life till we learn by experience! I imagined, when first I learned we would have to depend upon our own exertions for support, our greatest trial

would be to yield our position in society. I had no doubt but I would be able to earn a competence by the exercise of my talents. I am now convinced such will not be the case. But I will not yield to despondency. Fortunately I was one of those who, whilst at school, learned to cut and make dresses. How often Sister Angelique told me I used the scissors and needle with as much dexterity as if I were obliged to earn my bread by their use. Little did I then dream such would be the case! Oh, how lonely and friendless I feel! But I must not let my mother know it, or she will sink under her sorrows. Nor must I cloud the bright, sunshiny brow of my darling Lelia, by permitting her to know how sadly my heart beats in my bosom. No, no; when in the presence of those cherished ones, I must have encouraging words on my tongue, and a cheerful smile on my countenance. But, oh, how much I wish Annie Grayson were in the city! I should then feel I had one friend, for she has a true heart in her bosom that does not change with the changes of fortune. To her I could speak of my sorrows, and they would weigh less heavily upon me."

She was so absorbed in sad reflections, that she did not note a face in the crowd with which the Avenue was thronged.

A hand was laid upon her shoulder, and, looking up, an exclamation of glad surprise escaped her lips, for Annie Grayson was by her side.

"When did you return to the city?" inquired Emma.

"This morning," was the reply.

"I am so glad you have come! I was just wishing for you."

"And I was just going to see you; but having met you, you must return with me, and we can, in the quiet of my own room, talk over all that has transpired since last we met."

"Deep sorrow and sad changes have been mine."

"I have heard it all, and deeply do I sympathize with you."

Conversing thus, they arrived at Mr. Grayson's proud mansion, and passed on to Annie's room. When they were seated, Annie said:

"Now tell me, my dear friend, if I can in any way serve you."

Speak to me as you would to a sister, I have ever loved you as such."

Emma then told her all her plans for the future, how she had been treated with coldness, amounting almost to scorn, by those whom she had thought true friends. But now, having learned one lesson in the school of misfortune, she knew how to appreciate true kindness, which seemed so rare a quality.

Annie told her she might consider herself fortunate, that she had not succeeded in procuring music pupils; that parents would have expected her not only to teach their children, but actually to have given a talent for music to such as did not possess it. Whereas, in the capacity of dress maker, though she would find some who would be difficult to please, yet it would be less annoying than that of music teacher.

"You shall commence your new vocation by making my winter dresses, and I will send you customers, sparing you the trouble and mortification of seeking them; for, notwithstanding all your good sense and philosophy, it is impossible to not feel some mortification to go to those with whom you have once mingled in social intercourse, and ask employment."

"There is some truth in what you say, and I am truly grateful for your kind consideration."

"You will find me ever the same. No change of circumstance can ever lessen my friendship for you."

"I know and appreciate your noble heart, so unlike the great mass of those who flutter in the gay world. In the first days of my sad bereavement my thoughts turned to you."

"Ah, would I had been near you in those sad hours!"

"True, I had the gentle voice of darling Ella to soothe my heart, with kind words and sympathy, but she is not one to strengthen the heart to brave life's trials."

Annie urged Emma to stay and dine with her, but Emma knew her mother would feel lonely and anxious, if she did not return, therefore she would not remain. When she returned, the first word uttered by her mother, was,

"Have you procured any pupils?"

"I have not."

"Oh! what will become of us, destitution, starvation, beggary is before us."

"Not so, mother dear, I have procured employment for you and myself. I will not now teach music."

"What can we do?"

"Make dresses, and do any other sewing. I am delighted with our prospects. We will both be together; I will not be obliged to go from home in all kinds of weather, as would have been the case, had I procured music pupils."

"But then it is too humiliating to see you obliged to stoop to make dresses for those with whom you once associated."

"I do not feel my self-respect lessened. I am proud that I can thus earn my bread; and those whose good opinion is worth retaining, will respect us the more for our independence."

"From whom did you obtain employment?"

"Annie Grayson."

"Ah! when did Annie return?"

"This morning."

"Where did you see her?"

"I met her on the Avenue."

"How came she to offer you work?"

Emma told her, and by her sound reasoning, reconciled her to her future plans.

Time passed on, and Mrs. Carlton and Emma became the fashionable dressmakers of the city. They had more orders than they could attend to, and they would have been perfectly happy, but for the spirit of discontent that dwelt in the bosom of Mrs. Carlton. When all fear of actual want was dissipated, she then murmured at the severity of her lot, that she must see her daughter, who was fitted to be an ornament to society, fill so humble a station. To these repinings, Emma would say:

"Dear mother, I am happy this winter, I feel that I am performing a sacred duty, in laboring for you and Leila. Last winter, I felt that I was not making a proper use of my time. I was engaged in a constant round of exciting pleasure, that never left me a moment for calm reflection. My evenings are now devoted to instructing Leila, when my day's work is done; and I

can assure you, I derive more pleasure from her prattle, than I did from the insipid gossip of half the butterflies that flutter in the drawing-rooms of fashion."

"You may talk as much as you please, you cannot make me believe that a young girl like you, can give up parties, and all the pleasures attendant upon them, without regret."

Although at first Mrs. Carlton thought she never could be reconciled to her changed circumstances, in time she became interested and content, and the rare bits of fashionable gossip, that she often heard, gave her a true knowledge of the value of friendships that existed in the world of fashion. I will give one or two illustrations of the character of the conversations that frequently pass between ladies, when they happen to meet at the room of their dressmaker. You know the dressmaker is nobody, consequently her presence is no restraint upon the free expression of their sentiments. Miss Watkins had called to see a dress, that is ornamented with a new style of trimming. Whilst she is waiting, Mrs. Elton, one of the most dashing and fashionable ladies of the city comes in. Miss Watkins is delighted to see her, kisses her with much affection, saying:

"I feared you were sick, as I did not meet you last evening at Mrs. Bingham's. It was the most elegant party I have attended in Washington, you should not have stayed away."

"I was not invited."

"You not invited? I thought she and you were great friends?"

"We were, but my husband offended her lately, by asking about the health and prosperity of her father."

"That was a strange thing to take offence at!"

"It was, but since her husband has become a distinguished man, and she a leader of the *ton*, she does not like to have her early days recalled. At a party at one of the Secretaries a few evenings since, she was taking some extra airs on herself, and Mr. Elton asked her if her father kept tavern yet."

"Her father a tavern keeper?"

"Yes, indeed, and one of the poorest kind; nobody stops with him, but drovers and wagoners."

"And now she makes such a display, and treats poor people as if they were scarcely human!"

"Well, her father is poor enough."

"It is strange how she ever came to get such a husband as Mr. Bingham."

"Mere accident. She was very pretty when a girl. Mr. Bingham was traveling in the West, and happened to fall sick at her father's house; she waited on him during his illness. When he recovered, he married her, took her South, and she has never visited her family since."

This is one single specimen of many of the conversations that often occur in the dressmaker's rooms.

There is nothing like being occupied in some useful employment to drive discontent from the heart, and Mrs. Carlton had almost ceased repining at the remembrance of her changed circumstances, when one day, Clementina Wilkie brought a dress to be made, saying, she wished it made up with much care, as it was to wear at Annie Grayson's birth-night party.

When she had left, Emma saw with regret, that her mother's brow grew dark, indicating the presence of unpleasant thoughts in her heart. At length she said:

"It is no use, I can never bring myself to be content with this humble lot, this life of toil. And what makes it more galling, is to see the look of gratified triumph with which Clementina Wilkie, and such as she, order us to do their work. We, that last year were of the number invited to Mrs. Grayson's; you were one of the most admired belles, and now, what are we?—Dress makers."

"Mother, we have still much to be grateful for; we have health, and every comfort, with some true friends who feel an interest in our welfare. Annie Grayson treats us with as much attention as she did previous to our misfortunes."

"Yes, but she takes care not to invite us to her party. To be sure, we would not go; but if she is so above the opinions of society, why did she not invite us; we are the same persons we were last year, if our circumstances have changed. No, no, they

are all alike; some talk more kindly than others, but when it comes to acting, they are all alike—all the slaves of fashion.”

Whilst she was thus venting her discontent, one of Mr. Grayson’s servants entered, and handed her a note. Opening it, she found it was an invitation to the party. As she read it, a smile of gratification passed over her face, and she remarked:

“I am glad Annie did send an invitation, for had she not, I would have lost faith in her, too. Not that I think of going, but still it is a gratification to be remembered and treated with some consideration.”

Annie called herself in the course of the day, telling Mrs. Carlton that she would send the carriage for herself and Emma, to bring them to her father’s mansion on the evening of her birth-day.

“No, Annie,” said Mrs. Carlton, “we will not give you that trouble, for we will not attend. Yet, I thank you for the offer, it is gratifying to feel that one of our former friends is still true to us.”

“And to myself; for could a mere change of fortune make me forgetful or neglectful of a true friend, I would be unworthy the enjoyment to be derived from the friendship of such a noble heart as beats in Emma’s bosom. No, no; the trials through which she has passed, has but shown her true worth, and instead of depreciating, has elevated her in my estimation.”

“How few are like you; were there more such, the struggles of the unfortunate would lose half their bitterness.”

Turning to Emma, Annie said:

“I would be gratified if you would come; I have been so accustomed to your presence on my birth-day, that I shall feel time is bringing changes, that will weigh sadly on my spirits. Although you and Ella are so unlike, I have ever felt, since we all knelt at the same altar, and received the sacrament of baptism at the same time, that you were both twin spirits of my own.”

“Ella will be there, but I cannot possibly come. The death of my father is too recent, the sounds of mirth and glad music would fall discordantly on my heart; and besides, I know too

well the opinions and usages of society, to expose myself to the unkind comments which my presence in a fashionable assemblage, situated as I am, would elicit."

Time passed on, and Clementina, although surrounded by every luxury that wealth could procure, was far less happy than Emma. Her cousin Jenny had received an invitation to the party, and to Clementina's suggestion that she should not attend, as she was a stranger and would not derive any pleasure from the society of those she would meet there, she manifested her independent and determined character, by replying :

"No, sir-ree, you don't keep this child from that grand party ; I come here to go see all the grand folks, and you don't fool me out of it."

"Nobody will pay you any attention, and that will be mortifying."

"Laus a me, I don't expect any of these fine city folks to notice me, but I can look at 'em, and tell about 'em when I go home, that's what I come for."

"But they'll make fun of you."

"They will, eh? Then, I'll make fun of them ; I want to laugh, I hain't had a good hearty laugh since I come here : so if they want fun, I can make it for 'em. Laus, cousin Clem, you don't know me yet, you have not seen me in any of my high-falutin ways since I come here, case I've been kind o' home sick, but jest get me a going, if you want to see a wild colt."

"I hope you will act with propriety, if not out of respect for yourself you will respect your entertainers."

"I always respects them as respects me. But if they pokes fun at me, I guess I'll not jest keep my mouth shet and let 'em, and not say nothing."

Clementina, finding she could not prevail on Jenny to forego the pleasure of attending the party, was miserable, fearing ridicule would attach to herself from her relationship to Jenny. But it is ever thus, in the absence of real, we give ourselves imaginary trouble.

CHAPTER XL

BLIGHTED HOPES.

Floods of light illumined the proud mansion of Mr. Grayson. Sounds of music are borne on the night winds, the joyous laugh and light jest fell from the lips of the young and gay, whilst those more advanced in life look on the festive scene, renewing, as it were, their own youth by so doing. Mr. Grayson looks on his daughter with pride and love, as dressed in pure white, she moves among her guests endeavoring to promote the enjoyment of each. Prompted by that kindliness of heart, which was a predominating feature of her character, she was particularly attentive to Jenny, introducing her to several gentlemen and ladies. And to do Jenny justice, we must say she really looked well. Clementina Wilkie was magnificently dressed. Diamonds glittered upon her person, and the radiance of her dark eyes rivalled their brilliancy. As usual she was the centre of an admiring crowd. Distinguished statesmen were attracted by the brilliancy of her conversation, whilst fashionable exquisites were drawn to her side, by the brilliancy of her diamonds, and her reputation of being an heiress. Bright smiles wreathed her countenance, and sparkling thoughts, clothed in language of elegance, flowed from her lips. She was the envied of many a belle, but yet she was not happy, for Fred Leroux was not among those who were in her vicinity. She observed him on the opposite side near Ella Stanmore, her fair face was upturned to his, whilst from his dark eyes flashed a light of love, not to be mistaken. Just at this moment, Imogen, who was spending the winter with Annie, said to Clementina:

"See Fred, he perfectly idolizes Ella."

"Do you think so?"

"I am sure of it, and I think when he next visits his southern home, Ella will be his bride."

"No, he will never wed Ella."

"I know Fred well, and I can read every emotion of his heart in his countenance. I can see in every glance and tone that he is devoted to her."

"That may be; but Ella will *never* be his bride."

Time glided swiftly by, and Jenny, to whom the scene was new, enjoyed it much. If her cousin drew a crowd about her by her cultivation and elegance, Jenny attracted much attention, by her originality and want of cultivation.

During the evening a gentleman who had been an amused listener to her remarks, offered her a glass of wine; she declined it saying:

"No, indeed, I never drinks anything."

He insisted she should take it, remarking,—

"You will be considered unfashionable and wanting elegant taste, if you refuse to drink wine."

"But I belong to the temperance society."

"Oh, that is when you are way out west; but whilst you are here, in the world of fashion, you should lay by such old-fashioned notions."

"No, sir-e-e! I'll never be fashionable, if to be so I must sacrifice truth, and act contrary to my opinions of what is right."

"How sacrifice truth?"

"Why, to forfeit my pledge of temperance. And to tell you the truth, I think it would be well to have a temperance society here in the city."

"Why, we have them for common folks; but you don't find any of the 'upper ten' belonging to them."

"Well, I think some of the 'upper ten' would better belong to them. Why, I saw a gal the other evening—there, now, ! said gal, and cousin Clem cautioned me so much about saying gal, because it would show my raisin. Well, it's no use making a fuss about it now it's out; and it's no use to pretend to be something you ain't, for people will see through your pretension."

I'm nothing but a plain country gal, and I'm not ashamed to own it ; but, to please aunt Lucy and cousin Clem, I tried to act the fine lady, and you see I could not do it.—Well, as I was saying, I saw a gal the other evening drink a half dozen glasses of wine, and I tell you, her tongue went glib for awhile ; now, if she had not been one of the upper ten, people would have said she was tipsy."

"She was only animated ; you know persons who go so much in society, need something to animate them, or they would become languid."

"Would you like to see a sister of yours thus animated ? Our plain western folks would think it awful to see women animated in that manner."

"Yes, but there is some difference between a woman and a lady."

"I do not understand the difference."

"A lady has weak nerves, and requires a little stimulant to strengthen her."

"Yes, and the next time she will need a little more, and in the end she might not be able to do without it, or might not know when she had enough. No, no ; I will not drink wine, fashionable or unfashionable."

Here a lady who was near, and had been listening to the above conversation, remarked,—

"You advocate temperance so eloquently, you would better give a few lectures upon the subject."

Jenny looked at her earnestly for a moment, and then replied,

"I am not one of them folks what believes in women making public speeches."

"Yes, but could you not be induced to give a few lectures in consideration of the good you might do ?"

"I do not think any good would result from my assuming a position that it was never designed woman should occupy ; but still, if you think *you* would be benefited by hearing a lecture from me, I will give one now, if you will listen to me, as an especial favor to you."

The lady who had addressed Jenny with the intention of hav-

ing sport, concluded she would better leave her alone, as the laugh was likely to be against her.

Whilst Jenny was enjoying herself, and amusing those about her by her originality, a different scene was transpiring in another part of the house, that affected the whole future of one of the parties.

How often, at these brilliant parties where all seems gayety, pleasure and happiness, many a by-scene occurs, that does not meet the public eye, but it may have an influence on the future destiny of those engaged in it. Ella Stanmore, whose heart was filled with a quiet happiness, that made her indifferent to the gayety around her, had quietly slipped into the conservatory, to indulge in a bright dream of the future, which seemed to her so full of bliss. Many plants and shrubs, natives of the sunny South, shed their fragrance around her, and as she stood beneath the branches of an orange tree, a bright picture of a fair Southern home rose before her. For it was only the previous evening that Fred Leroux had breathed into her willing ear, in impassioned tones, words of undying love, and portrayed in glowing language his beautiful home in the South, asking her to be the divinity to preside over this fair home, and shed sunlight on his path. She had listened with a thrill of delight, for she had learned to love him with all her pure heart's devotedness. And it seemed to her it would be happiness almost equalling her dreams of heaven, to be ever by his side, and listening to the music of his voice.

She had not remained long indulging in this sweet reverie, which the memory of his words of love called up, when the soft silvery voice of Clementina Wilkie, mingling with the deep manly tones of Fred Leroux, fell on her ear. Clementina had observed Ella enter the conservatory, and she had drawn Fred there, that she might make him utter words which she knew would fall on Ella's heart with a crushing weight, that would make his pulses stand still. And, oh, how rudely was that reverie broken by the following conversation!

"'Tis too bad, there is no such thing as select society in Washington any more. At the houses of the most aristocratic, yo-

will probably meet daughters of washerwomen, seamstresses and all other common people, dressed up and showing themselves off to captivate the gentlemen, thinking to make a good match, and secure a handsome home."

"I presume they do not succeed, for I would detect pretension at once, were I to meet such."

"Well, suppose you should not, but were to fall in love with some fair creature whose mother had once occupied the useful post of washerwoman——"

"That is supposing an impossibility."

"Impossibility let it be; but we will suppose the thing possible, that you should fall in love, and plight your troth to such a one, would you wed her, should the knowledge of such having been her position become known to you, just before the benediction of the priest were spoken?"

"No, I would abandon her even at the foot of the altar. If I have an incurable weakness, it is pride of position. No one shall point to my wife, and say she was the daughter of a washerwoman, to bring the flush of mortification on my brow."

"Yet men holding the highest positions, have married beneath them."

"Then they were less fastidious than I."

"But if you were deeply in love, ere you were aware of the fact, you would overlook that circumstance, as others have done."

"No, I would tear her image from my bosom, even if my heart-strings were torn asunder by the act; my pride could never yield to love. But, pshaw! how earnest I grow, as if there were a possibility of your supposition ever becoming a truth."

Had Clementina dictated his replies to her remarks, they could not have suited her better, and they had produced just the effect she wished. They had extinguished every particle of happiness and hope in Ella's heart, and her first thought, when they had left the conservatory, was to get home. She felt that if she remained, her heart would burst, for it seemed that its pulsations had ceased, and every particle of blood in her body was settled round her heart. She left the conservatory, and went to the dressing-room. Finding Annie's maid there, she asked her to go home

with her, saying she felt unwell ; and as it was but a few doors to her mother's mansion, she would not trouble any of the gentlemen to accompany her.

Annie, who had missed her, and was looking for her, came into the room just as she was leaving. Seeing her pale face, she said :

"Ella, dear, you look as if you would faint ; do have a glass of wine, and then let Cousin Fred see you home."

"No, Annie, I do not feel faint, and I would not disturb your cousin ; I feel a sudden sickness, but will be better as soon as I get into the fresh air."

"But you do not know how ill you look."

"I shall be well by morning ; so good night, dear Annie."

It was about eleven o'clock when Ella returned home. Mrs. Stanmore, who was waiting for her, was surprised that she came home so early. But when her eye rested on her pallid brow, her surprise gave way to anxiety, and, starting from her seat, she exclaimed :

"Why, Ella, what is the matter with you ; you look ill, very ill !"

"Oh, mother ! why did you ever stoop to take washing to support us when father died ?"

"Why do you ask me such a question ?"

"Mother, why did you not take boarders, as many others do ?"

"What is the matter ? You talk wildly ; are you crazed ?"

"I believe I am, I feel strangely," said she, sinking on the sofa, and putting her hand to her brow. "But I was so happy, and these words fell on me so suddenly, turning all my bright dreams of the future to darkness, to despair ;" and her voice was sad and plaintive as the last sigh of Autumn.

Mrs. Stanmore threw her arms around her daughter, impressed a kiss upon her cold, pale brow, and burst into tears, saying :

"Can you not tell me what troubles you, my child ?"

The sight of her mother's emotion, recalled the wandering senses of Ella, and she told her of her betrothal to Fred Leroux, of her deep love for him, and of the conversation to which she listened in the conservatory ; "and as I listened," continued she,

"I thought if you had only kept a boarding-house, as so many ladies do when deprived of their means of a support by the death of their husbands, I should not have felt thus humbled."

"Listen, Ella," said the mother, "and I will tell you all my thoughts in the sad hour of my bereavement, and why I did not keep a boarding-house. As soon as my mind was sufficiently calm for reflection, my first thought was, How shall I support my helpless children? The idea of a boarding-house occurred to me, but as I looked on your fair young face, I said, Ella will be beautiful. In a boarding-house I cannot have her always under my own eye. She will be petted and praised; and ere her judgment is matured, her young heart will be filled with vanity and a love of admiration, which will render her a heartless creature of the world, instead of a true-souled woman.

"This consideration induced me to endeavor to earn my support by my needle. I tried it, and found I could only earn a scant living by devoting every moment of my time to my occupation.

"In the days of my prosperity, I had always washed and done up my own muslins. It now occurred to me, that I would offer to do such work for a few ladies, knowing I could earn more in one day, by doing such work, than I could by the use of my needle in a week. I succeeded beyond my expectations, by devoting two days in the week to washing and ironing muslins, which was not laborious, and the balance of my time to sewing, I was comfortable and independent. My mind was free from anxiety, and I had the entire evenings to attend to the moral and mental cultivation of yourself and Edwin. Never have I known happier hours than those pleasant evenings when my day's tasks were done, and I would note the gradual unfolding of the mental faculties of you and Edwin beneath my watchful care. I was happy in observing the purity and truthfulness of your character, whilst the manly independence and honorable aspirations of Edwin, gave promise that he would be all a fond mother's heart could wish. I thought not of the opinions with which the outer world regarded my occupation. I felt my children were secure from all injurious influences. When your lessons were

conned, and you knelt at my knee and said your evening prayers, I looked upon your innocent faces and was thankful that I had chosen a path which enabled me to attend to your moral training and imbue your young hearts with early piety."

"You were right, mother, you chose well for us. How selfish in me to reproach you. But you will forgive me. Yet, you cannot know with what a crushing weight those scathing words fell upon my spirit, blasting every bright hope that was budding in my heart, promising blossoms fair as those that bloomed in Paradise. Your kind words and gentle voice have recalled me to myself. But I am weary, undefined thoughts press upon my brain, I will go to my own room and ask of my Heavenly father, strength to sustain me in this dark hour of sorrow."

"Stay with me, my child, that I may soothe your troubled spirit."

"No, mother, God alone can be my solace. Go to your own room, mother, pray for your child, and then sleep calmly. Rest assured, your early teaching will now be of service to your stricken child. How fortunate are those who have a mother, whose instruction in childhood teaches them where to turn in the hour of trial."

Kissing her mother's cheek, she left the room.

Mrs. Stanmore looked after her retreating form, and as she contrasted her pale sorrowing face, with the bright beaming creature that she was a few hours previous, she groaned in agony of spirit—

"This is anguish beyond all I have known," and then her thoughts went back to the almost forgotten past. The memory of her own betrothal and happy marriage passed before her. The maternal happiness with which she had watched over her angel Ella, in infancy. Thus far all was bright. But now a slight shadow rests upon her pathway. Slight indeed at first, but deepening and growing more dark, till no ray of light rests upon her heart, save that which gleams from the bright eyes of her two fair children. Her husband had become the slave of the wine cup. His broad lands pass from him. His family is reduced to beggary, and worse than this, he himself to the level of a brute.

A reform and removal from the scene of his degradation, brings hope again to her bosom, but death follows ere he has retrieved his fortunes, and she is left destitute, obliged to labor for her loved ones. And this is the cause of her darling daughter's present anguish.

As her thoughts thus ran over the past and its present consequences, she exclaims passionately :

" Oh ; had all endured what I have done, the tempting wine would be banished from every household. It would no longer sparkle on the tables of the prosperous and happy, luring to wretchedness thousands who have not strength to withstand temptation."

Absorbed in sorrowful reflections, the hours crept slowly by. Morning came, and sleep had not visited the pillow of Mrs. Stanmore. And Ella—but of her in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XII.

THE HEART'S STRUGGLE.

As soon as Ella found herself alone in her own room, she threw herself on her knees, and poured forth her heart in prayer. When she rose, the wild, troubled expression had left her countenance, and in its stead there was a calm, sad expression, denoting resignation and sorrow.

Her face was colorless as marble, and as she rested her cheek upon her hand, you could have deemed you looked upon a beautiful statue, so unmovable, so absorbed was she. But, oh! how painfully active the spirit within, although no manifestation of it was apparent. She sat thus at least an hour, and during that time she had lived again, as it were, her whole life, from her innocent, happy childhood, to the present hour. First, her mother's low, sweet tones fell on her ear, as she taught her the evening lesson and nightly prayer. Next, the memory of her school-girl days, the quiet study room, the hours of recreation, with the bright hopes and anticipations of that period. She was again in that dear chapel, where, with a heart overflowing with pure and holy emotions, she had knelt at the altar to receive the sacrament of baptism. Music was gushing around her, but its notes were not glad and exulting as then, but sad and low, as if it were chanting the requiem of a broken heart; and flowers, fresh, blooming flowers, were there, shedding fragrance around. But the chapel was in mourning, indicating death, but this soon passed. Then words of impassioned love were poured into her willing ear, sinking into her heart of hearts, filling her soul with a dream of happiness too bright for earth, and yet, although all

of life, save this happy scene, was shut out from her vision, it brought no color to her cheek, no light to her eye. Every function of life seemed suspended, save that of thought. Lastly, came the remembrance of the conversation in the conservatory, and the deep, deep anguish of the last hour.

She now raised her hand to her brow, and rose from her seat. After standing thus a moment, she clasped her hands over her heart, as if to still its painful beatings, and sighed forth, in tones touchingly mournful :

"I know why this deep sorrow was permitted to fall upon my spirit ; I had given the love, which belongs only to the Creator, to the creature. Yes, I loved Fred with a depth and devotedness bordering on idolatry ; but 'tis past, past, forever past."

As she uttered the last word, she sank again in the chair, and, placing her hands before her face, tear-drops were soon glistening between her fingers. They were the first she had shed since the shattering of her bright hopes, and when she removed her hands from her face, the rigid and death-like immobility of her features had disappeared. She now rose and divested herself of her party attire. When she took from her brown curls the white Japonica, which was the only ornament she had worn in her hair, she gazed on it a moment, then a sad smile passed over her face, and she went to her writing-desk, took from it a sheet of paper, enveloped the delicate flower within it, and deposited it in a drawer, saying as she did so :

"This I will preserve, for Fred praised it, and said its delicate wax-like petals, were emblematic of the purity and beauty of the wearer. I know 'tis weakness to cherish it thus, but I will keep it as a memento of happy hours, and when its freshness and beauty shall have departed, it will be emblematic still, for it will be an emblem of my blighted hopes, and the withered flowers of happiness that were budding in my bosom."

Her eye then rested on a diamond ring that encircled her taper finger ; she raised her hand as if to remove it, then, letting it drop, as if she changed her mind, she said :

"No, no, it may remain where Fred placed it, until I see him, and then I will return it to him, when I release him from his

vows, for never can I be his, even would he desire to wed me. Oh, no, my pride would not permit it, for I have pride, although I have been deemed wanting in that quality."

Leaving the ring upon her finger, she retired to rest, but not to sleep, for during the weary watches of that long night, her thoughts were busy with the future as well as the past, and she had, ere the morning light, gained strength to go through the trials that awaited her with unwavering firmness. Just as the day dawned, exhausted nature yielded, and she sank into a calm, sweet sleep. When her mother came into her room, she found her thus, and, ejaculating a prayer of thankfulness, that her darling child was for a time forgetful of sorrow, she quietly left the room.

Ella, when she awoke, rose, and went immediately to her mother's sitting room, whose first salutation was :

"How is my darling, this morning?" To which she replied :

"The wild tumult that raged in my bosom has subsided, and I feel that I have strength to endure the disappointment which has fallen upon me. I sought strength where it is to be found, and I am now calm."

"I feared the rude shock would be more than you could bear, and you would sink under it."

"No, mother, I will henceforth devote my life to the performance of acts of kindness to my fellow creatures, who are unfortunate; and, from witnessing their happiness, learn to forget my own sorrow."

"You are right, my child, if you would drive sorrow from the heart, be active in the performance of benevolent deeds."

The breakfast hour soon came, and Ella forced herself to take some, knowing if she did not, it would give pain to her mother. When breakfast was over, Mrs. Stanmore, to divert her attention from herself, proposed that they should visit some poor families, who had been pensioners on her bounty during the winter, but Ella said :

"Not this morning, mother, Fred will call, and I would see him, and tell him myself, that the happy future we had anticipated, can never be realized."

"Have you strength to do so; would you not better defer it?"

"No, mother, I shall feel better when it is done; I would have it ended at once."

As Ella had anticipated, Fred called before the fashionable hour for visitors. When the bell rang, her heart beat wildly, and she trembled like an aspen, but ere the servant came to say, Mr. Leroux was in the parlor, she had recovered her self-possession. When she entered the parlor there was just the slightest tinge of color on her cheek, and the calm holy light that beamed from the mournful depths of her soft blue eye, added to her beauty, and she seemed a being too pure and lovely for earth. Fred rose from his seat, and taking her hand, he pressed it to his lips, saying:

"My own, my beautiful one, you must excuse me for calling so early, but when cousin Annie told me you had retired on account of indisposition, I was so anxious I scarce slept during the night. It was so unkind that you did not permit her to call me, to see you home."

Then seating her on the sofa he placed himself beside her, and gazing tenderly on her fair face, he imprinted a kiss upon her marble brow, and continued:

"I fear you are not well yet, you look so pale. But it will soon be my privilege to watch over your welfare; would it were so now, for you really look ill."

"Never can it be your task to watch over me," was the reply of Ella in a voice sad as the wail of a breaking heart.

These were the first words she had spoken since she entered the room, and her mournful tones smote painfully upon the heart of her affianced husband, and looking at her earnestly, he said:

"You talk wildly; I fear your reason wanders, and you speak the vagaries of a fevered brain."

"Would it were a vagary."

"What mean you?"

"That I can never be your bride."

"And why not? What have I done to pain or offend you, that you speak such cruel words."

"Nothing; you are all that is noble, generous, kind; but fate has placed a barrier between us."

"In what form? There can be no barrier that my love will not remove, unless you have ceased to love me."

"Ceased to love you! that were impossible while life animates this bosom."

"Then no other barrier can exist. My own bright one, are you not the light of my existence? Life without you would not be life. And do you suppose I will suffer any thing to hinder me from uniting my destiny to yours."

"Your own words have done it."

"What were those words?"

"Did you not say to Clementina Wilkie, last evening, that you would abandon your bride, even at the foot of the altar, should you learn that she was the daughter of a washerwoman?"

"I did."

"And when she said, 'If you loved her deeply, you would overlook that circumstance,' you declared you would tear her image from your bosom, even if your heart-strings were sundered by the act."

"Yes; but what has that to do with your becoming my wife?"

"I am a washerwoman's daughter."

"You, Ella, you! 'Tis impossible! The dignified, intellectual, and refined Mrs. Stanmore, could never have occupied that humble station."

"Yet she did it."

"Why did she do it? Her attainments are such, that even if necessity obliged her to earn a support for her family, she could have done so by engaging in some less degrading pursuit."

"It matters not to say why she did so, for the fact of her having done so cannot be changed, and that precludes a possibility of my becoming your wife."

"Ella, I cannot give you up; pride in this instance must yield to love."

"I cannot become the bride of one whose brow would be mantled with the blush of shame for my sake. You will soon

forget the dream of love that flashed for a time across your path."

"Never," said he, vehemently; then, rising, he walked the floor with much agitation. Suddenly stopping before her, he said: "And can you cast from you the bright hopes of the future without one emotion of regret?"

"Ask your own heart, if such a thing be possible."

"Then, why do you sit there so calmly, and say we must be separated through life?"

"The struggle is past. Look upon me; see the change one night of suffering has wrought. No, no, when I heard your replies to Clementina's questionings, in the conservatory, I felt that my heart strings would burst. None know, but God and my own spirit, what it has cost me to acquire this calmness."

"Ella, do not decide hastily; I will leave you now, and call again to-morrow."

"'Tis useless, I have decided."

"Say not so, Ella, say not so;" and taking her hand, he pressed it to his lips, and then left her, saying: "I will see you in the morning."

When he had left, Ella, who sat absorbed in her sorrowful thoughts, noted not the lapse of time, till her mother came in, and roused her from her reverie. She then observed the ring upon her finger; she had forgotten to return it, and she said to herself: "I shall be obliged to see him to-morrow to give it to him. I will converse with him, and hear the music of his voice once more." The day passed slowly by, and Ella exerted herself to converse with her mother, that that dear friend might not perceive the sadness that weighed upon her heart. Early in the evening she retired to rest, and when her mother, before going to her own, called at her daughter's room, she found her sleeping heavily, and her cheek, which had been so colorless during the day, was slightly flushed. As the mother gazed upon her sleeping child, she invoked heaven's blessings upon her head, and then turned and left her, with a heart lighter than when she entered, for she did not know that the heavy sleep and flushed cheek were indications of serious disease. But when she went

to call her in the morning, the fever had developed itself; the overtaken nerves had given way, and she was perfectly delirious. A physician was immediately sent for, and, in answer to the mother's anxious inquiry, he told her the disease was induced by mental excitement, and there was danger of inflammation of the brain, but he would endeavor to prevent such a termination.

Who can tell the anguish of that lone mother's heart as she watched beside her stricken child, and listened to her wild ravings; but even when reason was dethroned, that same gentleness, which had ever characterized her, was still apparent. She was not furious or ungovernable in her madness, but in sad and touching tones would speak of the past, and the injustice of that public opinion which had dashed the cup of happiness so suddenly from her lips. At other times, she would beg her brother to come and take her to his new home in the west, where labor was not considered degrading, but persons were respected in proportion as they were useful members of society. And that cherished brother was on his way to the city; he had been written for at the commencement of her illness, and he hastened to come, but it required many days ere he arrived. Yet the mother did not watch alone beside the sick bed during that time. Annie Grayson gave up the gayeties of the season, that she might soothe the lonely mother, and minister to her sick friend. There was another too, upon whose ears the sounds of mirth fell discordantly, and the gay word and light laugh smote painfully upon his heart. Yes, Fred Leroux, instead of being a visitant at the nightly parties to which he was invited, was at home in his own room, a prey to the deepest anguish, or when his feelings became so excited he could remain there no longer, he would go to Mrs. Stanmore's and wander through the rooms like one bereft of reason. Sometimes he would go to the sick chamber, when Ella lay quiet, but if she commenced in her piteous tones to repeat some of the disconnected thoughts that rambled through her brain, he would be so much overcome, that he would be obliged to leave the room at once. Two weeks slipped by without any perceptible change, only she grew weaker. There was not the slightest indication of returning

reason, and Mrs. Stanmore feared her daughter would pass from earth without being able to recognize her more. It was the fifteenth day from the commencement of her illness; she lay more quiet than she had done, but still she did not know those around her; she would call for her mother, but when she answered her call, she did not recognize her.

The evening shadows were deepening over the earth, and sorrowing friends were preparing for another night of lonely watching; the door-bell rang, and soon the brother's form cast a shadow in the room. In a moment he was beside his sister's bed: he gazed upon her pale face, and caught a glance of her eye, in which the fire of insanity gleamed, then stooping, he kissed her: she did not know him, but sighed forth,—

“Oh, why don't Eddy come—why don't Eddy come?”

“I am here, my dear sister,” replied her brother.

She took no notice of him, but continued,—

“'Tis no use to wish for him—he could not restore the light of happiness to my heart, nor remove this burning pain from my head, which scorches my brain. Oh, I am so weary; I would rest—even were it the rest of the grave! But then poor Eddy, he would miss me; and mother, she would be lonely without her Ella. Who would sing for her when the evening hour closes round her? I must stay; but yet my spirit craves rest.”

Whilst she thus ran on, the brother's thoughts went back to the bright, blooming creature he had left, three years previous, and then to return and see the wreck before him. It was too much, and he bowed his head and wept; yes, the strong man wept like a child!

Soon a hand was laid upon his shoulder, and a voice, whose tones thrilled his heart, even in that sad hour, said,—

“After three years' of absence, have you no word of greeting for your mother, and the playmate of your boyhood?”

He turned and saw Annie Grayson; her dark eyes beaming with sympathy, met his own; he grasped her hand, and said,—

“Yes, I have both greeting and thanks for you, who have been so kind as to come and watch beside the bed of sickness, in the hour of loneliness and darkness. And you, my mother, I am

here to comfort you in this hour of sorrow. But when I looked on Ella I forgot all, for the moment, save her. 'Tis too much that she cannot even realize I am by her side. And how strangely she talks, as if life were a burden that she would gladly lay down. What does it mean, mother?"

"To-morrow I will tell all that you would know, but not to-night."

The physician now came in; he seated himself beside the bed, took her hand, and, after feeling her pulse and examining her closely, he turned to Mrs. Stanmore, saying,—

"There will be a change to-night. If, toward midnight she grows calm, and falls into a quiet slumber, hopes may be entertained of her recovery. But if, on the contrary, she becomes more restless as the night advances, it is probable when the morning dawns, her pure spirit will have passed from earth."

Oh, how anxiously did they await the midnight hour! and when she sank into a quiet slumber, what joy came to their hearts! they felt she was saved, so implicit was their confidence in the skill of the physician. As soon as it was ascertained that she really slept, Annie proposed to Mrs. Stanmore that she should also take some rest, whilst she watched beside her friend. Edwin joined his entreaties to Annie's, saying he would watch with her, that she might not be lonely. To this Annie objected, thinking he was too much fatigued after his journey. But he insisted he felt no fatigue, and would remain beside his sister. Thus we see those two friends, in whose hearts a warmer feeling than that of friendship existed, after an absence of three years, watching the bed of sickness; and as they conversed in subdued tones in the hush of that room, who can tell the emotions that thrilled the bosom of each? Ella slept calmly during the night, and when she awoke in the morning, reason was restored. The joy and gratitude that swelled the hearts of Mrs. Stanmore and Edwin, I shall not attempt to describe.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE SPIRIT'S RELEASE.

WHEN Ella unclosed her eyes and saw Annie seated by her, she said :

"I had a pleasant dream ; I thought Eddy had come home."

"He has come, darling."

"Oh, where is he ?"

"Here by your side," said the brother, coming from a distant corner of the room to which he had retired, fearing if her eye rested on him when she first awoke, it would startle her.

As he approached, she attempted to rise, but had not strength to do so ; ceasing her effort, she remarked :

"I must have been ill ; I am so weak, I cannot raise my head from my pillow."

"You have been ill, very ill, but thank Heaven, you are much better," said the brother, stooping and caressing her ; "I trust you will soon be well, and ere I return to my Western home, I shall see my precious sister, the bright, joyous, gentle being she was when I left her."

"No Eddy, I can never be again the joyous creature I was when you left me. Your Ella's experience of life, since you saw her last, has changed her, sadly changed her. But I am weak and weary, and cannot speak of it this morning," said she, closing her eyes, and a tear glistened on her pale cheek, like a dew-drop on the lily.

In a few moments the physician came in and examined her long and critically ; he went to her brother and said, "All that she now required was careful nursing and quiet, the disease was

removed, but so slight was her hold on life, that the least agitation might prove fatal."

The third day after the return of her brother, he was endeavoring to interest her by telling her of his new home, and how she would enjoy the new scenes and kind friends she would there meet. She listened to him some time, then looking into his face, she said :

"No, Eddy, I shall never look on that new home ; do not flatter yourself that I shall get well, I feel it here," said she, placing her hand on her heart, and added, "Were it not for you and dear mamma, how gladly would I rest me in the grave, for brother dear, all the bright and happy hopes of youth have been crushed in my bosom."

"Tis weakness that makes you talk thus, darling ; when you recover your strength, you will not feel so desponding, and there is one beside those you have mentioned, who could not give you up ; he seems to live only to make inquiry for you, and you certainly would not let expressions drawn from him by an artful woman, separate two hearts so united."

"They have told you all ?"

"Yes ; and I have witnessed the anguish the noble-hearted young man feels on your account. And were it not for the strict injunctions of the physician, I could not withstand his earnest entreaties to be permitted to see you."

"Well, I would see him, but not to-day : I have already exerted myself as much as I am able. Yet, I could not hear you indulging in those bright anticipations, without telling you they could never be realized. When I am gone, you will supply my place to our dear mamma, that she may not feel too heavily my loss."

"Dear Ella, I cannot bear to hear you talk thus. Why should such thoughts take possession of you ? I am sure you are much better than you were."

"It may be so, but do not hope too confidently ; I would sleep, now ;" and, closing her eyes, she looked as if the spirit had already departed. As the brother gazed upon that calm, pale brow, his heart, which had hitherto cherished hopes of her recovery,

misgave him, and he felt the words she had just addressed to him were prophetic.

When Annie Grayson came to watch beside her, as she did some portion of each day, Edwin went to his mother's room with a sadder face than he had worn since the first evening of his arrival. His mother observed it, and rising from her seat, said hastily :

"Is Ella worse?"

"She does not seem so, but I have no hope of her recovery."

"Why so?"

"Her body is too weak, to bear up under the mental depression that weighs upon her."

He then related to his mother the conversation that had just passed between them, and told her, he thought it would be better to permit Frederick Leroux to see her, as it might have a good effect upon her. To this, his mother assented, and when Fred, as was his custom, came in the evening to inquire how Ella had passed the day, Mrs. Staamore told him, he might to-morrow, if she grew no worse, see her himself.

"Oh," said he, "I cannot sufficiently thank you for your kindness, you cannot conceive what I have suffered. If I can only hear Ella say, she forgives me for what she has suffered, and will permit me to devote my life to her happiness, then I will be truly blest."

In the evening, the physician gave Ella a composing draught. She slept calmly during the night, and the next morning was much refreshed. She took some breakfast, and when Frederick Leroux came at nine o'clock, she told her mother she wished to see him. When he approached her, he was so overcome with emotion, he could not utter a word. He took her hand, which was white as the snowy counterpane on which it rested, and pressed it to his lips, whilst a scalding tear-drop fell upon it. She regarded him kindly, saying, in a voice sweet and low :

"Do not give way to such emotion, it is painful for me to witness."

"Then I will repress my feelings, for I have given you pain enough already. Henceforth it shall be my study to make your

life happy—no sorrow shall come near you, if doting, watchful love can avert it."

"I know you love me, but not long will I tax that love—my hold on life is slight; I may pass from earth any day. I feel it—I know it; and that is why I wished to see you, and, that you might not grieve too deeply when I am gone, to tell you how bright the dream of happiness your love shed over a portion of my existence. It was a foreshadowing of that pure and unalloyed happiness to which I am hastening; for heaven is perfect love, where no evil or discordant feeling may come to mar its pleasures."

"Ella, I cannot bear to hear you talk thus; you are so young, and life is all bright before you."

"Yes, 'tis now bright, but lately a shadow rested on my spirit dark as night, and nothing but my near approach to heaven hath dispelled it."

"Oh, speak not so!—live for me—for the friends that adore you! Life to me would have no object, no aim, unless blessed with thy presence—thy love. You are my angel—my star of hope—my all of brightness in life. Oh, it cannot be—it cannot be!" he exclaimed, with passionate energy, "that like a bright meteor you have crossed my path, ennobling, elevating, purifying my nature, by the holiness and purity of your own, and then to be so quickly removed—shutting out all hope from my heart!"

"No, no, Frederick; let it inspire you with a higher, nobler hope,—that of performing the duty you owe to your country and your God, that you may look forward to a blissful reunion in that world to which my spirit is so near. Be no longer a trifler in the saloons of fashion—listen not to the siren voice of pleasure, that would lure you to follow in her train, which would enfeeble and finally destroy those nobler qualities of heart and mind which, if properly directed, will win the admiration of man and the approbation of God. When poor Ella Stanmore rests in the quiet of the grave, will you remember her love and her adjurations?"

As she thus addressed him, this pale, fragile being of earth, resembled some guardian spirit sent to counsel the wayward,

ardent, and gifted Leroux. As he looked upon her spiritual beauty, and listened to her impassioned words, he trembled with emotion ; and when she had concluded, he exclaimed,—

“Oh, heaven ! do not torture me thus !—yes, yes ; when you shall have passed from my sight, your memory will form a part of my existence : it will cling to me like my own shadow—but, oh, God ! I cannot believe the bright hopes of life are thus to be blighted in the bud. You will live for my sake. The thought of losing you drives me to madness.”

“Calm yourself, and let us say, ‘God’s will be done.’”

“As well bid the ocean be calm, when the wildest storms have dashed its waves into fury, as bid me calm the tumultuous grief that rages in my bosom.”

“The wildest storms are succeeded by a calm ; and grief, the most violent, must yield to the soothing influence of time.”

“Yes, but the cruel wrecks, with which the ocean is strewn during a storm, bring sadness and despair to many an aching, anxious heart, that no future sunshine can gladden, and the hopes that have once been crushed, can never bloom again.”

“But in their stead may spring those immortal hopes, that only become brighter and stronger as the disappointments of earth weigh more heavily upon the weary spirit. I have realized that such is the case, and I now feel calm and happy.”

When Frederick Leroux had gone, and Mrs. Stanmore came to sit beside her daughter, Ella said to her mother :

“I feel strong to-day, and I would tell you a wish that has taken possession of me.”

“What is it, my darling ?”

“That my funeral services may be performed in that little chapel, where I received the sacrament of baptism. I know good sister Angelique, and our Right Reverend Archbishop will permit it, when they know it is my dying wish.”

Whilst she was conversing with her mother, Annie Grayson came in. When she saw her, she looked up into her face, with a bright smile, saying :

“I was just wishing to see you. I know your kind, generous heart ; I have tested your unchanging friendship, so unlike the

ordinary friendships of the world, therefore, would I tax it still further ; when I am gone, you must comfort my dear mamma in her hours of loneliness and sorrow. Ere the bright spring flowers shall have unfolded their petals, I shall have passed away, and I trust all who have loved me, will endeavor to cheer her, when Eddy has returned to his western home."

"I will be to her as a daughter, not only for your dear sake, but for the love I bear her."

Several days passed away, without producing a perceptible change in Ella. Watchful friends were ever round her, whilst she seemed to be more and more assimilated to the blessed spirits above. Emma Carlton, who had been the cherished friend of her heart from childhood, having now to toil for a subsistence, could seldom be with her during the day, but she would ever, during the evening, steal an hour from her labors to spend with her friend, and the intercourse of those quiet evening hours, strengthened her to perform her daily tasks with cheerfulness and hope. The last evening Emma spent with her, Ella took from her finger a ring, and placed it upon that of her friend, saying :

"Wear this for my sake ; and if, in your journeying through life, sorrow dark and deep should threaten to overwhelm you, look upon this little circlet of gold ; and let it say to you, for her whose lips will be silent in death, and who has known heart-grief,—'The heart that trusteth in God, will be comforted and sustained.' "

"Yes, Ella, I will never forget the many kind precepts you have impressed upon my heart since you have been confined to a sick room, and I trust in every trial, I may be enabled to emulate your patience and resignation."

When Emma rose to depart, she was led by an irresistible impulse to take leave of Ella more tenderly than was her wont, and when she had repeatedly kissed her pale cheek, she left her, feeling more sad than she had done on any previous evening.

The next morning was one of those bright spring days, which sometimes visits us during winter here in Washington. Ella asked her mother to put back the curtains, that the sunbeams

might enter her chamber. When she had done so, and the glad rays flashed into the apartment, she exclaimed with animation :

"Oh beautiful, beautiful ! We must be confined to a sick room, and have the glorious sunlight shut out from it for a time, if we would appreciate it truly. I feel that my spirit could be borne to heaven on a beam of light. And my dear mamma, do not be startled, if as the sunlight fades from earth this coming eve, my soul should take its departure to that realm where no shadow of night ever comes. I dreamed during the past night such would be the case."

"God's will be done," said the mother, meekly.

"And now I have some little remembrances I wish you to give to my friends when I am gone. In the drawer of my toilet bureau, you will find enwrapped in a sheet of paper, the japonica I wore in my hair the night of Annie's party. Give it to Fred, and tell him to keep it, and when he looks upon it, to remember that earth's brightest hopes may in one short hour be withered as utterly as that frail flower. You will, also, when I am dead, remove from my finger this diamond ring ; it was placed there by him ; you will return it to him, he will prize it for the associations connected with it. Give my Bible to Eddy : tell him to let no day pass without reading some portion of its contents. Give my cross, that I have worn ever since it was presented to me by dear sister Angelique, to Annie ; tell her to let it remind her of the sufferings our Saviour endured on the cross for our redemption, and if sorrow should ever overshadow her path, to look to Him for comfort. And to you, dear mamma, I would leave as my special gift, the locket which was presented me by Eddy, containing his miniature and mine. I would retain a place in the memory of those I have loved, when death shall have claimed me. This is the last weakness of earth. You will do as I wish you ?"

"Yes, my angel child, every wish of yours shall be sacredly performed."

"Now I would sleep. Shut out the bright light."

Mrs. Stanmore did as requested, and then seated herself beside her. Ella sank into a quiet sleep, from which she did not awake

till late in the afternoon. When she unclosed her eyes, the friends she most loved were around her.

A sweet smile passed over her features and she remarked :

"This is as I would have it, how calm, how happy I feel. Oh how lovely, how beautiful," said she, pointing upward, "but listen, oh listen, the angelic choir is coming."

And in a voice, such as we might fancy belonged to the Heavenly choir, she warbled forth :

What soft, sweet strains of music
Are o'er my senses stealing,
And angel voices near me,
Are Heaven's joys revealing.

They say, Come sister spirit.
Though thy youthful hopes were riven,
A purer joy than aught of earth,
Will soon be thine in Heaven.

A golden harp awaits thee,
With robes of snowy whiteness.
A crown of glory is prepared,
Surpassing noon-day brightness.

We come to bear thee home,
Each earthly tie to sever,
And God's eternal love,
Will give thee joy forever.

As she ceased, a smile lighted up her features, and her spirit had passed to heaven, without a struggle, leaving upon her face the impress of beauty almost divine. Of all the friends who had loved her, none felt so utterly miserable as Frederick Leroux. When her mother, who was seated beside her, said calmly :

"The pure spirit is released."

Frederick Leroux came to her side, and, looking sadly upon the beautiful inanimate clay, he said, in tones of deepest anguish :

"Oh, God! the light of my life is darkened forever!" and, stooping, he impressed a kiss upon the pale brow; then, without uttering another word, he left the room. Nor did he ever look on that sweet face again. When her funeral took place in the

little chapel, two days after her death, it was not attended by a long train of distinguished persons, for she was not one of the celebrities of Washington. But true and loving hearts were there, and when the low, solemn notes of the organ filled the chapel, and the voices of the nuns chanted a requiem for the beautiful departed, it fell upon the heart of Frederick Leroux with a softening influence, and the despair and hopelessness which had benumbed every faculty, passed away, and he was enabled to look forward to a reunion in that realm, to which she, who was too pure, too gentle for earth, had gone, and he murmured:

"It is ever thus; whom the gods love, die early."

CHAPTER XIV.

TRIALS OF THE POOR.

IN the whirl of fashionable life at Washington, the death even of a President, is scarcely thought of a week after the funeral, and, of course, when an ordinary individual passes away, it is not even known, save to the bereaved ones, that death has been among them. Assemblies, levees, receptions, and balls, with other amusements, occupy the time and thoughts of the votaries of pleasure, leaving no time to soothe the sorrowing heart, or administer relief to the unfortunate. But Annie Grayson was not one of those. Although her position was such as made it necessary for her to receive and give much of her time to society, yet she suffered no day to pass without seeing Mrs. Stanmore. Edwin remained in the city several weeks, being unwilling to leave his mother, until time should have enabled her to feel less severely the loss of Ella.

Occasionally, when Annie had an evening that she was not engaged with those fashionable friends who thought they had an entire claim to her society, she would spend an evening with Edwin and his mother; and happier was she in those quiet evenings than when surrounded by the gay and fashionable, and listening to the unmeaning compliments which were poured into her ear by the crowds of admirers which were ever in her train. Some were attracted by the reputation of being the possessor of great wealth, and the high position she occupied in the world of fashion; whilst others really appreciated her noble character and were charmed by her graces of mind and person. Among

the latter class was the Marquis B., and he remained in Washington, with the hope of winning her to be his bride.

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The *elite* of the federal city are all excitement and anticipation, for the lady of the French minister had sent out cards for a grand ball in honor of the Marquis, her nephew. The Melvina Janes, Ophelia Anns, Ceciliass, and Amelias, who consider themselves the beauties and belles of their set, are all deeply engaged in shopping, giving orders to dress-makers, looking at jewellery, and discussing the manner in which they will have their hair dressed, with as much earnestness as if these were the most important matters in life; and indeed they do regard them as such, for each thought at the coming ball she should make a conquest of the Marquis, and secure to herself the most desirable match to be met with in Washington.

The day preceding the ball has arrived, and heaven have mercy on the dress-makers, for their sister mortals have none! After having scarcely taken time to eat or sleep for the past week, and thinking they will soon put the finishing touch to the beautiful dresses that are to render the wearers conspicuous at the coming ball, for elegance and taste, some capricious beauty, who never knows her own mind two hours at a time, after having her dress made and trimmed precisely by her direction, when it is sent home finds it does not look so becoming as she fancied it would; therefore, it is sent back with a message something of this import: That she is surprised any one with the least pretension to good taste, should send such a piece of work from her shop, and unless she will alter it according to a direction she sends, in time for this evening, she will never give her another bit of work as long as she lives, and she will prevent her friends from giving her their custom also.

The mistress of the shop looks at the dress, then at the over-worked and wearied-looking girls in her employ. She is on the point of returning the dress with an indignant message, but the thought, that she is dependent on such as she, for employment for herself and girls, obliges her to repress her indignation, and say to the servant in a bland tone:

"Tell your mistress, we will make every possible exertion to have it as she wishes it, by eight o'clock."

Emma Carlton, who, the preceding winter, had been one of the most admired in the world of fashion, is now, as well as others, engaged in the same occupation, obliged to toil at unreasonable hours, and put up with the whims and caprices of those spoiled children of fashion, who, it seems, are not aware that those who are obliged to labor, possess any sensibility, or can ever become wearied. Emma endures it all with the fortitude of a stoic, when it affects only herself; but when her mother and those whom she at times hires to assist her, are oppressed by it, it weighs heavily upon her heart. She, during the past week, with a little French girl to whom she had given employment, had sat up sewing till twelve and one o'clock every night, and yet, she, on the morning preceding the ball, has just commenced a beautiful satin she is to make for Annie Grayson; but the others are all finished and sent home, and she looks up at her mother with a cheerful smile, saying :

"Well, mother, we have a good day's work before us; but dear Annie will not find fault, if we are a little late: Eulalie and I can finish it by half past eight o'clock this evening, so you need not assist us, to-day."

"Oh, I am so glad; for my head aches so severely, I am almost blind, and if you can get it done, I will lie down till I feel better."

"Do so, mother dear, and be sure you give yourself no uneasiness about the work, it will all be done in good time, for I will have every thing ready for Eulalie by the time she comes, and then we will both go to sewing, and we will soon finish it."

Although Emma spoke so cheerfully to her mother, her own temples were throbbing with pain; her overtasked energies were just ready to give way, but they were sustained by a determined will. She had cut all the trimmings and prepared everything for work, but Eulalie had not yet come.

"I fear that she is sick," said she to herself: "she is very delicate; and I, who am blessed with such good health, am almost exhausted. Oh! did the daughters of fashion know with what aching heads, as well as hearts, their elegant dresses are some-

times prepared, they would not be so exacting ; and if a fold or a puff did not just suit their taste, they would not insist that it should be changed, when there was no time to do it."

She went to the door, to look if she could see her coming. Just as she opened it, Eulalie stepped on the door-sill, looking as if she would faint ; and had not Emma caught her and supported her to a chair, she would have fallen. Emma snatched up a bottle of Cologne which was on her work-stand, for she had been using it for a headache, and bathed her face and temples. In a few moments color returned to her lips, and she smiled faintly, saying,—

"Nothing has so strengthening an effect on me as Cologne, when I feel weak and faint. I told mamma this morning if I only had some Cologne to bathe my face, I would be able to take some breakfast—then I should not have felt so faint."

"You should not have come out when you were too unwell to take any breakfast," said Emma, looking with compassion on the pale, delicate creature before her, and forgetting her own perplexity in commiseration for the sorrow-stricken face before her.

"I often feel so, and a walk in the fresh air revives me : I knew how much was to be done to-day, and that my assistance could not be dispensed with."

"But, my dear child, you are not able to sew."

"Oh, yes, I shall soon be well—I was only overcome with fatigue."

"Well, you must lie down on the lounge and rest, whilst I prepare you a cup of coffee ; then, if you feel strong enough, we will both go to work, and we will get through by the time it is needed."

Eulalie did as Emma desired her, for she really felt perfectly exhausted, although she tried to persuade herself and Emma that she would soon feel as well as usual. Emma brought her a nice cup of coffee. When she had drank it, and partaken of a bit of ham and a fresh light roll that Emma had insisted she should taste, she felt much refreshed ; and the two girls had just taken their seat beside the work-table, when a rap was heard at the

door. It was opened, and the maid of Miss Wilkie entered, bearing a handbox. Emma, with a look of anxiety, said,—

“What is wanted, Chloe?”

“Why Miss Clementina says as how she don’t like the puffs on the skirt of her dress. She wants them taken off, and plain folds in their place.”

“She ordered it to be trimmed in that manner.”

“But she changed her mind since, ’case Miss Jennys got puffs on hers, and my young missus is mighty ’fined in her ideas; she can’t bear to wear nothing like that poor uncultivated white gal.”

“Did she tell you so?”

“No, but I knows it; she just told me to tote it here and have it changed; but I’s so used to young missus, I knows her thoughts by the cut of her eye.”

“Well, Chloe, go back to your mistress, and tell her my mother is so unwell, she is unable to assist me to-day; Eulalie is scarce able to sit up, and we have just commenced a dress that is wanted for this evening. If she can wait ’till to-morrow to have the trimmings changed, it will be a great favor.”

“But laws, she wants to wear it to-night.”

“Yes, but when she knows how I am situated, she would per haps wear it as it is for one evening.”

“I don’t believe she will, but I’ll go home and ax her.”

Chloe returned in a few minutes, saying, “Miss Clementina must have the trimmings changed. When I told her your mammy was sick, and Miss Eulalie looked as pale as a sheet; Miss Jenny tried to persuade her to wear it as it is, telling her, she thought it was very handsum, but this only made her more unreconciled with it, and she was agoing to box my ears for having the impidence to ax her to wait ’till to-morrow, and she said people what had to work for their living, had no business to give up for every little pain and ache. So I just run back to tell you she must have it fixed right this evening.”

Whilst Chloe was telling what her young missus said, Annie Grayson came in, and Emma said to Chloe:

“You may go home and tell your mistress, it shall be done.”

Without giving any further attention to Chloe, Emma turned to Annie, and told her what trouble she was in. Annie said, "she should give herself no uneasiness, but put her dress away, she was perfectly indifferent about having it for the ball. It would give her far more pain to know any one worked upon it when suffering, than it would to do without it."

"Oh, Annie, were there more such as you, how much would the sufferings of the unfortunate be lessened. When every nerve is throbbing with weariness and pain, how greatly is it increased by the reproaches and fault finding of many of our employers; and we are tempted to sin by wishing for the rest and quietness of the grave."

"I trust you have never been tempted thus far."

"Not yet, but I sometimes fear when I look on others, I may be."

As she uttered this remark, a slight moan fell on her ear, and looking toward the window where Eulalie was sitting, she saw her leaning on the window sill almost gasping for breath. She ran to her, took her hand and spoke soothingly to her, telling her she must lie down, and not attempt to work any more during the day.

"But you will not be able to retrim that dress without my assistance."

"Give yourself no anxiety about that," said Annie, approaching her. "I have two or three hours to spare, so I will send the carriage home instead of making some calls as I designed doing, and I will assist Emma in your place."

"Oh, you are an angel of mercy. I have often heard your name coupled with the prayers of the unfortunate; may sorrow never cause a tear to stain thy fair cheek."

Eulalie was prevailed on to lie down, and Annie sent the carriage home, telling the driver to return for her at three o'clock. This done, she went to work to assist Emma in arranging the trimmings on Clementina's dress, and before three o'clock they had it nearly completed. When the carriage came to drive her home, she insisted upon driving round and setting Eulalie down at her mother's; for the poor girl was really not able to walk

three squares, which was the distance she lived from Mrs. Carlton's. When Annie arrived at home, her mother was quite indignant that she should be obliged to attend the ball without a new dress for the occasion.

But Annie was so happy in the reflection that she had been the means of giving some comfort to a sorrowing heart, that the regrets of her mother did not affect her. And that evening, if she was not arrayed in a dress of the latest style and most costly material, she was adorned with that which gave her a beauty surpassing that which is derived from the taste and art of the dress-maker. A pure and gentle spirit invests its possessor with charms almost divine.

The elegant mansion of the representative of France, is crowded with fashion and beauty. His accomplished lady, with a grace peculiarly her own, receives her guests, and, with a tact which belongs to the French, makes each feel that the evening's entertainment would have been incomplete, without his or her presence.

Music calls the young and joyous to the dance, whilst the light jest and gay laugh speak of happy hearts; yet even in this brilliant assemblage, where all wear so fair an outside, there are some in whose hearts the feelings of envy and jealousy mar the pleasure they otherwise might enjoy. Clementina Wilkie, as usual, was the centre of an admiring crowd. Near her was a lady who was not remarkable for talent or beauty, but she had the good fortune to be a favorite of Miss Wilkie's, and thus was brought into observation, by being ever near that star of the first magnitude. And it was whispered by some, that the secret of her being regarded so kindly by the beautiful and accomplished Clementina was, that she was ever ready to depreciate, by some unkind remark, the merits of those who possessed qualities likely to render them rivals of the peerless belle. Be that as it may, she was very much disposed to make remarks of not the most amiable character. Clementina was engaged in an animated conversation with the Marquis, on the exquisite taste of French ladies in dress; when Annie passed, dressed in a plain simple white dress, with no ornaments on her person, save a necklace of pearl, and a white rose in her hair. The eye of the Marquis rested on

her admiringly as she passed, whilst the shadow of a frown flitted over the fair brow of Clementina, which Miss Coats, her friend, observing, remarked :

"I think Miss Grayson might have condescended to honor our hostess, by dressing with a little more elegance for her ball."

"She could not have dressed more becoming to her style of beauty ; she looks like an angel in that pure white robe, unadorned with jewels."

"Perhaps some of her admirers have whispered something of that kind in her ear," said Miss Wilkie, "and that is the reason why she is so plainly attired ; it is a very pretty conceit, an angel among us common mortals."

"I know, Cousin Clem, why she hasn't got on a new dress," said Jenny Lumpkin, who happened to be near, and heard the above conversation, "she is an angel of goodness."

The shadow of a frown upon Miss Wilkie's brow, darkened to a reality, as she turned to her cousin, and said :

"I presume, Miss Lumpkin, it is of no interest to the gentlemen to know why a lady wears a certain dress at a party."

"Oh, yes," said one of the gentlemen, "do, let us hear it."

Jenny then related the incidents of the morning, as they occurred in Emma Carlton's sewing room, which had been witnessed by Chloe, and repeated by her to Jenny. When she had concluded, the Marquis remarked :

"I hope the lady who so unfeelingly persisted upon the change in the trimmings of her dress, will derive as much pleasure from the opportunity of exhibiting herself thus attired, as she inflicted pain upon the poor overworked sewing girl whom she obliged to change it.—'Tis strange," said he half musingly, "that vanity and love of admiration will make even gentle woman forgetful of her better nature."

At this moment, a gentleman came to claim Clementina's hand for the dance, and the Marquis, turning to Jenny, entered into conversation with her, for her praises of Annie Grayson was music to him. He soon discovered, that although her language had not that elegance and refinement which captivates the listener, she had a kind and generous heart, and he listened to her

remarks with pleasure. After conversing with her some time, he asked her to promenade with him, and we see our plain country girl, who does not make any pretension to the airs and graces of city life, receiving attention from one who has been an honored guest in the saloons of royalty itself.

Annie Grayson could not enter into the spirit of the gay scene about her, for her thoughts frequently reverted to the sad and suffering countenance of that fragile looking creature she had met at Emma Carlton's. She determined to call in the morning, and offer her every kindness in her power, and much was it needed. For whilst all was music and mirth in the mansion of the French Minister, the mother of Eulalie was watching, almost broken hearted, beside her daughter, who was tossing in a burning fever, which had been brought on by over-exertion, in assisting to prepare the elegant dresses, the presence of whose wearers added brilliancy to this gay scene. Very many such pictures of suffering may be seen in Washington, by those who will take the time to look beyond the glittering surface of society. Whilst in one square is reverly and feasting with a profusion amounting to waste, a few doors distant is sickness and sorrow with the most abject want. The child of poverty craves the grateful juice of the orange to cool her fever-parched lips, which the mother has not the means of procuring, whilst the pampered child of wealth will fret because its appetite is satiated, and it does not enjoy the delicacies spread before it. Eulalie Dupré, towards morning, fell into a short slumber, and when she awoke, she said :

"Oh, mother ! I had such a pleasant dream ; I thought we were again in our sunny southern home, and I was picking oranges fresh from the trees, and they were so grateful to my taste."

"To-morrow, you shall have one, if I do without my breakfast to procure it for you."

"And do you suppose I could taste it, when I knew it was procured at such a sacrifice?"

"No, darling, that is the trouble ; you have sacrificed your health, and would sacrifice your life for my comfort ; and yet are unwilling for me to deprive myself of anything for you."

"Mother, I am young, and can endure hardships ; but it would

be too hard for you, now when you are old, to be deprived of every comfort."

"I have one blessing of more worth than the wealth of India. I have an affectionate, generous-hearted child; and whilst heaven spares me my child, I will endeavor to not repine at the losses I have sustained."

In converse like this, the weary watches of the night wore away; and just as day dawned, both mother and daughter slept, forgetting for awhile their cares.

CHAPTER XV.

JENNY'S DESCRIPTION OF CITY LIFE.

THE sun was shining brightly into the humble apartment occupied by Madame Dupré and her daughter, when Eulalie unclosed her eyes. Her mother still slept; and as she looked upon the beautiful but care-worn features of that idolized mother, she murmured, scarcely audibly,—

“Yes—oh, yes, I have been tempted to commit that great sin of wishing for the rest found in the quiet of the grave, not realizing in the anguish of my heart the wickedness of murmuring at the dispensations of divine goodness.” Then casting her eyes on a small painting which hung at the foot of the bed, representing Mary and the child Jesus, she extended her hands towards it, and ejaculated, with much fervor,—

“Oh, thou Saviour of mankind! who descended to earth and endured all the sorrows that humanity suffers, give me grace and strength to bear, with a spirit of resignation, the trials that may be mine, feeling they are sent to chasten and purify the spirit, fitting it for heaven. Thou hast promised to care for the widow and orphan, and I will trust in thee.”

As she uttered the last sentence, a smile indicating a peaceful confiding spirit passed over her beautiful features, for Eulalie Dupré was exquisitely beautiful.

When Madame Dupré awoke, she was happy to find the fever which had raged so fearfully during the night, much abated, and Eulalie suffering slightly in comparison to what she had endured. She arose, and of the small stock of fuel with which she was supplied, she made a cheerful fire, making the room comfortable.

She then prepared a cup of tea and some toast for herself and daughter. Eulalie, although she had no appetite, forced herself to take something for her mother's sake. After partaking of some refreshments, she attempted to rise, but found herself too weak to do so. She sank exhausted on the pillow, saying:

"Mother, I will have to lie in bed to-day, but do not be anxious, I shall be well to-morrow; the effects of one night's fever will not last long."

Poor child, it was not one night's fever that had reduced her thus. It was the constant unwearied exertion of months; she had overtaken her energies, and now they had given way. The mother, as she pushed back the raven hair from the fair, pale brow of her child, and gazed into her dark loving eyes, exclaimed:

"Oh, my precious, my only one, I have permitted you to wear out your young life for me; the rose of health has faded from your cheek, and the elasticity which belongs to youth, has given place to the languor of debility. I noted it day by day, and yet was unable to shield you from the constant exertion that was thus wearing your young life away, and now you are laid upon a bed of sickness; what is to become of us!"

"Let us put our trust in our heavenly Father: He, who sent the ravens to feed his prophet, will not forget us, if we put our trust in him."

"I know not from whence help will come."

"Nor I; but I know dear, kind-hearted Emma Carlton will be to see me, and I will ask her to send me work whilst I am unable to go to her room to sew."

"But, my dear child, you are unable to do anything, if you had the work in the house; you cannot even sit up."

"I will be better to-morrow, dear mother; I prayed for a trusting spirit whilst you slept, and God in mercy gave it to me. I feel assured he will not permit us to be tried beyond what we are able to bear."

Whilst she was endeavoring to infuse into the heart of her mother the same faith that sustained her own, Emma, accompanied by Annie Grayson, called. Annie, with that grace and

kindness which springs from the heart, addressed Madame Dupré with as much respect as if she had been mistress of the proudest mansion in Washington. After speaking to the mother, she approached the bed where the daughter lay, and as she looked upon the pale high forehead on which intellect sat enthroned, she took deep interest in that lone girl.

Turning to Madame Dupré, she said in a low tone that Eulalie might not hear her :

"Madam, having met your daughter at my friend Emma Carlton's, where she was quite ill, I took the liberty of calling to inquire after her health. I am happy to find she is much better; yet her appearance indicates extreme delicacy of constitution, and I fear exposure and exertion might bring upon her that blight of the beautiful—consumption."

"Ah, my dear young lady, it is that thought which makes me wretched; but should that be the case, I will not be the first unfortunate mother who has not been able to shield her child from such a fate. And who, with a breaking heart, has watched day by day, her heart's only treasure engaged in those tasks, which she knew would bring her to an early grave. God only knows the sorrows of the unfortunate."

"I would avert such a fate from your daughter. I have rarely met any one in whom I felt so great an interest. I have no sister or brother; permit me to be as a sister to your beautiful daughter, and supply you, until her health is perfectly restored, with those comforts which she supplied by her labor. The bountiful giver of all good, has lavished on me the gifts of fortune, and I would manifest my gratitude, by administering to the wants of those who are less fortunate."

So kindly and gracefully was assistance offered, that the proud Madame Dupré felt that she could receive it without a feeling of humiliation. When Annie left, she placed in her hand her purse, saying:

"Accept this for your daughter's sake, and tell her she must permit me to be her friend."

"She will be too happy to accept your friendship, for 'tis but few who seek the friendship of the poor."

When they had gone, Eulalie, who had been conversing with Emma whilst her mother was engaged with Annie, said :

"Mother, dear, did I not tell you our Heavenly Father would care for us ? See here ! Emma brought me three dollars, and says I shall have work in the house. So dismiss your fears ; we shall not perish for want of fuel to warm us."

"And see here !" said the mother, displaying the purse left by Annie ; "this will procure for you some of the delicacies a sick person needs, and will enable you to let sewing alone until you regain your strength. Oh, she is an angel of mercy, sent to drive away the feelings of despair that was gathering about my heart. And she said you must give her your friendship."

"Her generous kindness would win all hearts to love her ; she is one of the noble beings sent upon earth, that we may not lose our faith in human goodness."

Whilst Annie Grayson is soothing the sorrows of the unfortunate, by gentle words and generous deeds, Clementina Wilkie is wasting the morning in slumber ; and when she does arise, she makes every one within her influence, uncomfortable by her fretfulness and discontent. The voice of Annie, which was naturally full of music, seemed to become more sweetly musical, from her habit of speaking in gentle tones to soothe sorrowing hearts, and a more elevated and soul-speaking beauty sat upon her features. Nature had been equally kind to Clementina, in bestowing upon her a voice attuned to sweetest melody, with beauty of the highest order ; and she had cultivated the art of conversation, giving to every word a perfect enunciation, and in the blandest tones, giving the most elegant intonation to language when, in society, she was conversing with senators, secretaries, and gentlemen distinguished for literary and scientific attainments. Yet, her constant indulgence in fault-finding, in harsh, imperious tones, when not in society, was having its effects on her voice ; for, sometimes, when excited, she would, unawares to herself, utter a sharp, discordant sentence, which was the more noted from its striking contrast with her usual low, silvery tones. Let us look in and see how Clementina is engaged the morning after the ball. She had risen about twelve o'clock, and

after rating the servant, for not divining just what moment she would choose to rise, and having her breakfast prepared for her at that moment, she declares she will not eat any thing, if she had to wait for it.

"Laws, Miss Clementina; I'll have you a good cup of coffee in five minutes."

"That is just five minutes too long; you ought to have had it ready."

"But you knows, Miss, if it ain't right fresh, you won't drink it, and I did not know jest what minit you'd git up."

"Well, and if I have to wait five minutes, I won't drink it," saying this, she left the dining-room and proceeded to her aunt's room.

When the cook was assured she was out of hearing, she turned to her fellow-servant and said with a low chuckle:

"Now, I wonder who Miss Clem spites, 'case she don't eat nothing, not me I'm shore! I likes to please people, but when they won't be pleased, I'm not a gwine to fret myself."

"I'll tell you what it is," replied the other servant, "I likes Miss Jenny a sight better than I does Miss Clem, and she's more of a lady, if she don't look so grand and palavering like before company."

"Yes, indeed," answered the cook, "I calls them ladies what's always the same thing and knows how to treat servants."

Whilst the servants were discussing the qualities of the two young ladies in the kitchen, Clementina was venting her ill-nature by complaining of Jenny's rudeness and want of polish. When Clementina entered her aunt's room, after leaving the dining-room, to her aunt's inquiry, how she felt, she replied:

"Oh wretched, wretched in both body and mind; I cannot endure the annoyance of being accompanied by that rude, unpollished niece of yours. Whenever I go to a party, it destroys every particle of my enjoyment."

"Why, my dear niece, she does not seem to intrude herself upon you; I observed last evening, she scarcely came near you the whole evening?"

"But her very presence in the same room mortifies me, because it is known such a rude creature is my cousin."

"I think, niece, you are rather prejudiced against poor Jenny, and cannot do her justice; last evening the nephew of our accomplished hostess, paid her the compliment of promenading with her, and you must admit, he is one of the most refined gentlemen to be met in Washington society. And, our hostess herself remarked, there was a simplicity and freshness about her that was very interesting."

"That was only a refined way of saying she is an ignorant fool."

"I also overheard Annie Grayson telling a gentleman, who inquired who she was, that she was a young lady from the west, and that she possessed many amiable qualities."

"Who cares for Annie Grayson's good opinion? She could find amiable qualities in a street beggar."

"Well, it was the attention we received from Mrs. Grayson, that enabled us to get into good society."

"Ah, Mrs. Grayson is a very different person from Annie. But it's no use talking, for I am determined in future, if Jenny goes to the parties, I will not. So, something must be done to prevent her from going, or I stay at home."

"Tell me what to do and I'll do it. Anything to make you satisfied."

"I do not know what you can do with her unless you send her to Georgetown to school: there she would be kept close enough."

"I will send her there with pleasure if she will go."

"If she will go? I'd make her go!"

"That is easier said than done. She has an independent spirit, and a will as unyielding as yours when she determines on a thing. But she has been kind and affectionate to me, and complied with every wish I have expressed. I will propose it to her."

After having made her aunt thoroughly uncomfortable, she went into the parlor, where she found Jenny seated at the piano,

amusing herself by thumping upon its keys and singing as loud as she could.

Clementina, who was in no amiable humor before, was now almost furious; and, in an angry voice, she exclaimed,—

“It is more than human patience can bear to have a coarse country bore like you stuck up in the parlor to annoy me with your boisterous screeching.”

Jenny, who was very quick to observe everything, had caught many of Clementina’s elegant phrases, and could imitate her manner and voice precisely. Without leaving her seat, she turned towards her with a look brimful of mischief, and said,—

“Is it the lute-toned voice of the starry-eyed Miss Wilkie, that greets me?”

— “I believe you are an imp of the devil!”

“What exceedingly beautiful language! it vibrates upon my spirits-chords like soft, sweet music.”

“If I had my way, I would turn you into the street.”

“I have not the least doubt but you would, fair lady; but that would be no great hardship either, for I learn, from the daily conversation of our lady visitors, that good servants are scarce in the city; and as I learned to do all kinds of housework when at home, I am sure I could soon get a good situation as servant, and would not that be a good subject for gossip—the cousin of the accomplished Clementina Wilkie a servant!”

“That is all you are fit for; and I do wish you were at home milking cows, feeding pigs, and such other employment suited to you.”

“Thank you, Miss Wilkie, for your kind wishes: I would love dearly to see my cabin-home—there is kindness and love there, if not elegance. I believe you are passionately fond of music, fair lady, and in return I will favor you with some;” and, turning to the piano and beating its keys violently, she commenced singing:

So you wish I was in Illinois,
A milking of the kine,
Toting the calves to pasture,
Or feeding of the swine:

Or hunting of the hen's nests,
In the stable, 'mong the hay,
I've performed these tasks right blithely,
In my merry childhood's day.

I've plucked the prairie flowers,
In the joyous months of spring,
And chased the painted butterfly,
That gayly spreads its wing ;
When voices of glad music,
Were heard all o'er the plain,—
I dearly love my humble home ;
Would I were there again.

As she sang the last stanza, her voice became softened and subdued, as if the memory of a happy picture were called up. The spirit of mischief and mocking died out in her heart, and in her eye a tear glistened. Rising, she approached Clementina, saying :

"Cousin Clem, I would love you if you would let me ; my heart yearns for love and kindness. I know I am uneducated, and in that respect vastly your inferior ; but when you remind me, in taunting words, of the immeasurable difference between us, it rouses the quick spirit in my bosom, and I use taunting words in reply, but I regret it as soon as it is passed. Let us in future avoid such things. I admire your beauty, and when I listen to your conversation with the gentlemen who frequently visit here, I am delighted. If you would only cultivate the heart as well as the intellect, what a peerless, glorious creature you would be."

"Your compliments and advice are as annoying as your taunts," was the reply of the spoiled beauty.

Jenny, without saying any thing more, went to her room.

She naturally possessed a fine mind, as well as a good heart, and she had improved much, by her short association with cultivated and intellectual society. When the deep emotions of her heart were touched, she expressed herself with elegance, considering her want of education. But she was full of mischief, and when her cousin provoked her too far, she would retaliate, by assuming the manner and language of the most ignorant booby.

As she had remarked, her heart craved love and sympathy. She threw herself into a seat, and a train of thought something like this, passed through her mind. "I would not exchange my own humble home, with its sweet affections, for the elegant mansion of my aunt, with the heartlessness and want of generous sympathies of its inmates. True, I covet knowledge, and its refining influences; but if, by acquiring it, I lose the generous impulses that are now swelling in my bosom, I would not possess it; for the most ennobling passion of earth, is sympathy for, and a desire to make our fellow-beings happy. But it is no use to sit here thinking and moping. I will go and write a letter home."

"MY DEAR BROTHERS,—I promised you, when I left home, to describe everything I saw in Washington. I have not kept my promise very well, but I will endeavor to do better in future. I am growing very wise since I came to this city, where the wise men of the nation assemble every winter. I have learned more of life and human nature, during the few weeks I have been here, than I would have done at home in an age. I have tested the truth of the adage, that, "All is not gold that glitters." There is much tinsel, which one at the first glance, would believe to be gold, but it would not bear a close examination. Yet, there is much true gold. However, I sat down to describe, not moralize. Well, I will commence by describing a party I attended at the French Minister's. "Astonishing!" I fancy I hear you exclaim. "It can't be possible that our sister, was at a party at a Foreign Minister's house." Well, it's the truth, and what is more, I actually promenaded—that means walked—through the rooms with a real nobleman. I reckon you are very curious to know what nobility are like. Well, I'll tell you, they are just like other people. I always had an idea that if I were to see a nobleman, I would feel kind of scared, and would not know what to say, but I'll declare, last evening I felt more at my ease, while the Marquis was talking to me, than I do when in the society of most of the people I meet in Washington.—He talked to me about the prairies in Illinois, the Mississippi river, and all such things. It

seemed like he knowed I could talk much better about them than anything else, and asked about them on purpose. I've found out what true politeness is, it is to make those in your society feel easy and comfortable, and that is what the French people do, and that is the reason why they are called the politest nation in the world. Now, a great many of our people think the way to show politeness, is to take on themselves grand airs, as much as to say, see how polite and genteel I am, but I've found that is not true politeness. Oh, I've learned sights of things since I came here. The real lady never takes any airs on herself, it is she that pretends to be something, and even a country girl like me, can see the difference between those that think they are ladies, because they have got money to buy fine clothes, and those what are true ladies. Law, I have written my whole letter and have not described anything; well, next time I write, I'll describe the Senate and House of Representatives. Give my love to papa and mamma, and all the children.

"Your loving sister,

"JENNY LUMPKIN."

Jenny had just finished her letter when her aunt came into the room. After speaking about the ball of the preceding evening, she proposed to Jenny to go to school. Jenny heard the proposition with pleasure, and Clementina will soon be rid of her annoyance.

CHAPTER XVI.

FREDERICK MEETS A FRIEND OF HIS CHILDHOOD.

It was one of those bright wintry days, that makes the heart bound with animation, and which calls forth the beauty and fashion of Washington, when Annie entered the parlor, equipped for a walk. She observed her cousin leaning upon the centre-table, seemingly absorbed in painful thoughts. Approaching him, she said :

"Come, cousin Fred, I will not permit you to indulge in sad and gloomy reflections this bright morning ; you must go out and make some calls with me."

"No, no, dear Annie, my heart is the sepulchre of blighted hopes, and I cannot mingle with the glad and gay."

"It is not the glad and gay I design visiting, but the suffering and unfortunate. Come with me, and by alleviating their sufferings, you will lighten the load of grief that weighs upon your bosom."

"Here, take my purse, and use its contents for the relief of the poor, but do not ask me to accompany you ; for, the brightness of the day, by its contrast with the darkness of my spirit, seems a mockery of my feelings."

"I insist upon your accompanying me this once. I am going to call on a poor widow and her daughter. I met the daughter at Mrs. Carlton's ; they once resided in the south. Eulalie, the daughter, is one of the most spirituelle looking creatures I ever met."

"In my boyhood, I had a playmate of that name ; well do I remember her. We were much together, for she was the god-

child of my mother; she was dear to me as a sister. I was a wild wayward boy, and she was a sweet gentle being, with thoughts and feelings beyond her years. I remember, as if it were yesterday, how, at the sweet sunset hour, when I would be rolling my hoop, or bouncing my ball, she would call to me, saying: "Come, Freddy, do come sit by me, and let us talk about the beautiful sunset." Sometimes, I would do as she wished me, and when the rays of the departing orb of light would tinge the clouds with purple and gold, she would ask me, if I did not think God sent his angels to paint the sky, to give us an idea of the beauty of Heaven, and make us good children, that we might go there. Frequently, I would make some light reply, and she would gaze on me with her dark dreamy eyes, as if she would read my heart, and say: "Oh, Freddy, I am afraid you are a naughty boy, and do not think enough about Heaven." I have not seen or heard from her for many years. After the death of my mother, her father sold his plantation, removed to New Orleans, and engaged in mercantile business. For a time, we kept up a correspondence, children as we were. At length, I became negligent; finally, our correspondence ceased, and I have never heard anything from her since. If she be living, she must be beautiful and gifted, and an ornament to the society in which she mingles."

"Well, will you accompany me?"

"Yes, for the name of your protege has slightly dissipated the stagnation that was gathering round my heart, and called up memories of by-gone years, with something like a pleasurable emotion."

"Let us go immediately, and when you see her, you will feel some interest in the present."

It had been several days since the ball, and Eulalie was able to sit up. When Annie and her cousin called, they found her alone, her mother having stepped out to see a sick child. As they entered, Eulalie raised her eyes, and ere Annie had time to present her cousin, he was by her side, had seized her hand, and inquired if her name was not Eulalie Dupré.

"It is," she replied.

"Have you forgotten me, Frederick Leroux, the playmate of your childhood?"

"Oh no, the memory of that happy period often recurs to me. But so changed are you, I should not have known you."

"And you too, how changed you are! But your eyes are the same: I recognized you the moment you raised them to my face."

"I did not know you were in the city."

"Nor did I dream of meeting you. But you have been unfortunate. How is it that I see the daughter of the wealthy planter occupying this mean abode?"

"The old story—fortune lost by abused confidence."

"But why did you not apply to me? I have wealth more than I can use; and who has so good a right, as my mother's god-child, to share it with me?"

"Had my god-mother lived, I should have felt no delicacy in applying to her, when misfortune came upon us; but to you I could not apply. With my father's loss of fortune, came estrangement of friends. I am happy to learn that fortune has been propitious, and no shadow has darkened the pathway of the playmate of my childhood."

"Ah, my cherished friend, there are other sorrows beside the loss of fortune, that cast a shadow dark as night on the future; but of that we will not speak. I am alone in this dreary world; you must, for my sainted mother's sake as well as my own, permit me to be a brother to you. You and your mother must accompany me to my home in the South, and time may enable us to forget the sorrows we have endured."

"Oh, that will be happiness, to see my dear mother pleasantly situated in the sunny clime, where the happiest hours of her life were passed! It was seeing her deprived of all the comforts to which she had been accustomed, that made me feel so keenly our losses."

Whilst they were conversing, Mrs. Dupré returned, and Fred insisted that she should give him the privilege of acting as if he were her own son, and she should permit him to procure her boarding until they could return to his home in Louisiana. She

told him she could accept much from the son of the most cherished friend of her youth ; but she felt that that would be taxing his kindness too far. However, she was prevailed on to accept his offered kindness ; and in compliance with her wish, that he should procure a situation in some quiet private house, he got his cousin to call upon Mrs. Stanmore, and ask her to give them a home in her house during the winter. Mrs. Stanmore said she would be happy indeed to do so, for Edwin wished to return to his western home, and yet remained on account of his unwillingness to leave her alone. Mrs. Dupré and her daughter removed immediately to Mrs. Stanmore's, and ere a month had passed, Eulalie had recovered her health ; and her amiability so won the heart of Mrs. Stanmore, that she told Annie she felt disposed to claim her as her own. And Frederick Leroux, who could not be prevailed on to mingle in gay society, was frequently a visitor at this quiet mansion.

Eulalie, who had for him the regard of a sister, endeavored to rouse him from the deep melancholy that preyed upon him, by every means she could devise. When she would speak to him of the future, and what his native state expected of him with his education and talents, he would reply, with a mournful voice,—

“ You do not know how heart-broken I am.”

“ But, you should not yield to such despondency,” urged she : “ it is unmanly—unworthy the proud, high-spirited boy, who was the playmate of my childhood. Do you remember the high aspirations that swelled in your boyish bosom ?—how you used to tell me of the high positions you meant to attain in the councils of the nation ?”

“ Yes, I remember them ; but a brighter dream than that of fame crossed my spirit. Now that the vision of beauty and goodness that called it up has passed from earth, I can only brood over the past. You have never loved, or you would know how I feel.”

A slight blush suffused her cheek as she replied :

“ Yes, I have loved ; and the dream that, for a time, lent a warmer, brighter hue to life, was destined, like your own, to leave me with an aching, hopeless heart. Would you hear the

incidents of my life since we played together beneath the orange groves of your own beautiful home? It will perhaps while away an hour."

"Yes, Eulalie, tell them to me: I feel more interested in you than any other human being, for you mingled your tears with mine over the grave of my mother—the first real grief that ever fell on my heart. And the second was the loss of my little playmate when your father moved to New Orleans; and who could then have imagined our next meeting would be in the Federal city, under circumstances so changed? But tell me how that change came about."

"When my father moved to New Orleans and engaged in the mercantile business, for a time success crowned all his undertakings, and he was considered one of the wealthiest men of the city. When I had completed my education, and was presented to society, I was surrounded with admirers, for my father was wealthy. I listened to their compliments and fine speeches with indifference, for none of them came up to my ideal of the being upon whom the deep love, of which I knew my heart capable, was to be bestowed.

"Whilst at school, I had contracted a friendship with a girl about my own age; she was an orphan, both her parents being dead; she had an only brother, who though poor, educated his sister, by denying himself every recreation and pleasure that the young are fond of indulging in. Julia Peyton and I, completed our education at the same time. The evening previous to our leaving school, I was enumerating the many pleasures I anticipated, and asked Julia if she did not rejoice in the prospect of being emancipated from school.

"'No,' she replied, 'for whilst we are in the convent walls, the distinctions which the world makes between the rich and poor are not felt. But when we go forth in society, then must the pathway of the rich merchant's daughter, and the poor clerk's sister, diverge widely. It will be painful for me to give up that intercourse, which for the past two years, has given me so much pleasure. You will not miss the society of poor Julia Peyton, for friends will crowd around the beautiful, accomplished and

wealthy Eulalie Dupré. Whilst I shall have none, save my brother, to speak a kindly word to me.' I replied to her, 'And do you think me so heartless as to let the want of wealth be a barrier to our friendship. No, indeed, I will visit you more frequently than I do any other friends.'

"She gave me her address ere we parted, and true to my promise, I called on her in a few days. She and her brother occupied a sweet little cottage surrounded by a garden. The jasmine was trained over the window, the rose and sweet briar were beside the door, shedding their perfume on the gentle breezes, that made music round the eaves of that lowly home. Though the home was lowly, its inmates were possessed of a high order of intellect. Charles, the brother, after the toils of the day were passed, devoted himself to study; he was a severe student, preparing himself for the bar. But I will not describe him, suffice it to say, in him I found my ideal, and poured out my heart's deep affections on him. Summer glided by and winter was ushered in. It was one of unusual gayety. Ere its close I had several offers of marriage, but to the surprise of my father, I refused them all. Among my numerous suitors, was one of the partners of the house in which Charles was employed. One evening, just as the sweet spring flowers were bursting into bloom, I called to see Julia; when her brother came in, he seemed sad and dispirited. I laughingly asked, 'how it was possible to wear so gloomy a face in the joyous spring time?'

" 'When the heart is sad,' replied he, 'a shadow will naturally rest on the brow.'

" 'But why should your heart be sad?'

" 'I have learned to regard your visits to Julia, as the bright spots of my monotonous life.'

" 'Then, why look so grave at finding me here?'

" I scarce know what was his answer; but before I returned home that evening, he had declared his love in burning words that found a response in my own heart. A few days after, Mr. Beekman, his employer, urged his suit: I refused him; he appealed to my father, who was desirous to see me united to him. My father wished me to reconsider the matter, and probably I

would give him a favorable answer : I told him it was useless, that my heart was already engaged. . He insisted upon knowing upon whom I had bestowed my affections, and when he learned it was a clerk in the employ of Mr. Beekman, he was perfectly furious. He forbid me visiting Julia again, saying he had tolerated our intimacy, because he thought his daughter too proud to be in any danger of falling in love with a clerk. I told him, although fortune had acted the step-dame toward Charles, nature had bestowed on him her choicest gifts. However, my father determined I should not see him again, for, in a few days, he announced to me his intention of spending the summer in the North. I called and bade adieu to Julia and her brother ere we departed. Sad indeed was that parting, for my father had called and heaped reproaches on Charles for stealing the affections of his daughter. His proud sensitive spirit was deeply wounded. We parted sadly, I to mingle in gayeties for which I had no relish, he to engage in the duties of his station. When we returned in the fall, I resolved to see my friends again. I called at the cottage, but found it occupied by strangers. To my inquiries respecting its former inmates, they could give no answer. Not long after our return from the North, the commercial and fashionable circles of New Orleans were startled by the announcement that my father was a bankrupt. Large speculations, entered into by his partner during his absence, had turned out unfortunate, and they were obliged to suspend payment. My father gave up everything to his creditors. My mother had a small estate ; this she disposed of, and we were persuaded by a friend to come to Washington, and he would procure a situation for my father in some of the public offices. But before leaving the Crescent City, I was sorely tried. Mr. Beekman again sought my hand. My father, whose spirit seemed broken by the unlooked for misfortune that had reduced him from affluence to poverty, begged me to accept him, saying I was unfit to brave the trials of poverty, but was formed to grace the position I had occupied, and which might still be mine. It was hard for me to resist the earnest entreaty of my father, and the mute appeals of my mother's sorrowful face ; yet, I had courage to be true to myself, and not sacrifice the better

portion of my nature for gold. My father finding me inflexible in my determination, we came to this city. The friend who had induced my father to come, wrote to the Secretary of State, who was a relation of his, that a situation given to my father would be esteemed a personal favor. My father, immediately after our arrival in the city, called at the Secretary's residence, but was told that it was not the hour that the Secretary received visitors. The next day he called at the State department, and had the extraordinary good fortune to be permitted to see the Secretary. He presented the letter to him, and as it was from a particular friend, he actually read it, which, we afterwards learned, was a great act of condescension on his part. When he had finished reading it, he turned to father, telling him to call again, as he was very busy to-day, but he would be happy to oblige his friend by serving him, and he should be attended to at his earliest convenience. My father returned with a lighter heart in his bosom than he had felt since his failure; he was confident, ere a week should have passed, he would be provided with a situation, which, if it did not enable him to live in the style to which he had been accustomed, would keep his wife and child from actual want, and for this he would be thankful. The week passed, and he called again on the Secretary. This time he did not see him. He called again and again, but with the same success; he was always engaged, or out, or some other excuse. At length my father became thoroughly discouraged, and would call no more. The money we had brought with us, was fast disappearing. Something must be done; so I called myself upon the wife of the Secretary, stated our situation, and asked her to interest herself for us; she promised to do so, telling me at the same time, she doubted whether any thing could be done for us.

"My father now wrote to the Secretary, asking for a candid answer, whether he would receive a situation or not. He was assured he would receive one. Week after week passed by. It has been said, 'Hope deferred, makes the heart sick;' in this instance, it made the body sick too, for my father was now prostrated on a bed of sickness, brought on by anxiety and care. He lingered a few weeks, and then died; and the day before his

death, we received a communication notifying him of his appointment to a situation, with a salary of twelve hundred dollars a year. I felt indignant, and might have been unjust, for I fancied the Secretary, and those having patronage, considered it a kind of stock belonging to them, to trade on, and attach as many political friends to themselves as possible. I imagined they knew that my father was at the point of death, and they had sent him the appointment, knowing he could not live, to satisfy the friend who had recommended him, as he possessed much influence with his party in his own State, and when my father died, they could use the appointment to bestow upon the protege of some other politician, thus adding another to their list of supporters. Now, I do not blame those having the appointing power, for not giving office to all that apply, for that would be impossible, as the number of applicants is so great; but when they have no situation to give, they should say so candidly, and relieve the applicant from that suspense and uncertainty which wears the spirit out, and prevents him from seeking other business. But I am digressing from the incidents of my own life. After the death of my father, when we had defrayed all the expenses attendant upon his sickness, our stock of money was very small, and the shock of grief fell so heavily on my mother, that she was incapable of attending to any thing.

"My first thought was to lessen our expenses, the next to procure work. Before the expiration of a week, both of these were accomplished. I rented the poor tenement you found us in, purchased the scant supply of furniture you saw, and removed immediately from our boarding house, telling the ladies in the house, I would deem it a favor if they would permit me to do any sewing they wished to have done. They gave me sewing; but it was making of shirts, and I soon saw, that, at the prices paid, we could not keep actual want from the door; consequently, I sought employment with a mantua-maker, and was so fortunate as to be employed by Emma Carlton, who was considerate and kind, always paying me extra, when we were crowded with work. Notwithstanding my exertion, we had to deny ourselves many of the comforts of life; and sometimes, when I would look on my mo-

ther, who had been accustomed to life's luxuries, deprived of its comforts, my heart would reproach me with selfishness, that I had not sacrificed myself, by marrying one whom I did not love, thus securing her a comfortable home. In time, another anxiety was added to the many that already oppressed me. I felt that my health was failing: the exertion I was obliged to make was more than my constitution was able to bear; and the thought of what would become of us when I was unable to earn the pittance that sustained us, haunted me day and night. I would endeavor to reassure myself, by saying, God will not forsake those who trust in him; but my heart was sad. However, the event has proved that, in the hour of need, he did not forsake us, but sent us succor, by the hand of yourself and cousin. And I now feel that I have much to be thankful for, notwithstanding the bright dream of love that glowed in my bosom has ended in sorrow. I will endeavor to manifest my gratitude by an active, useful life; and I trust you will not be found to possess less strength of character than a girl, but will shake off the lethargy of grief that is paralyzing your energies, and devote the talents, with which you are so eminently gifted, to the service of your country."

"Eulalie, you have taught me a lesson that I will profit by, and no longer brood over my heart's blighted hopes. But there is a difference between us: my happiness was dashed from me by my own folly."

"Or rather by the art of a cunning, heartless woman."

"I trust, she may suffer the pangs I have endured."

"That is an unchristian sentiment, and should not be permitted to dwell in your bosom. Think not of the past; but look to the future."

"Henceforth, that shall be my motto. As I cannot love again, I will woo fame; and you shall see me occupy a high place in the councils of my country."

CHAPTER XVII.

A DINNER-PARTY.

"CARDS for a dinner-party at Mrs. Parkinson's," said Annie Grayson, handing an invitation to Frederick Leroux: "you promised you would overcome the morbid melancholy that is stealing over you. Shall I say accepted for you?"

"I would rather it had been any other place than there. It is exceedingly unpleasant for me to be in the society of Clementina Wilkie. However, you may decide for me."

"I think it will be better to accept, as it will be a gratification to mamma, and I love to give her a pleasure when I can do so consistent with my notions of right."

"You are, dear girl, a true-souled woman, and I will be guided by your counsel whilst I remain in the city. Had I done so sooner, I would not now— But of that I will not speak. Henceforth, the past will be buried deep in my bosom, and the present and future shall constitute my life. I will mingle in society, practice all the graceful courtesies of life, without any heart, for that is what passes current in Washington. Mere externals, a fine display, without any regard to moral elevation or purity."

"Nay, nay, cousin Fred, you should not say the society of Washington. They to whom you allude, are the trading politicians, adventurers, and fashionable ladies, who are drawn to the Federal city during the sessions of Congress. But, among the true society of Washington, you will find as high a standard of morals, and as much Christian charity, as in any other city in the world. But these virtues do not meet the eye of the visitor and stranger: they are quiet and unobtrusive, whilst the frivolity

and vain show of the heartless and pleasure-seeking crowd, attract the attention of all."

"I know, cousin Annie, you are all that is noble, generous, and kind, with a heart to feel for, and a hand to alleviate the sorrows of your fellow creatures; but where can you point me to another like yourself?"

"There are many who devote as much to ameliorating the sorrows of the unfortunate as I, but you must go into abodes of misery to recognize them."

But we will look in on Clementina Wilkie, who is seated beside the centre-table receiving the answers to the invitations that had been sent out. When she received a note from Annie Grayson, containing an acceptance for all the family, including her cousin, something like a flush of triumph passed over her features, as she mentally exclaimed,—“I feared Frederick Leroux would avoid me, but, fortunately for my plans, he has accepted my aunt’s invitation. Let me but get his society, and I can fascinate him. I know all his tastes and preferences, as well as his weak points. He is a great admirer of personal beauty, and has a keen appreciation of fine language—these are mine; and now that death has removed Ella Stanmore, I can attach him to myself.” But she forgot in her calculations, that a true woman’s heart was above all else, and in that she was wanting.

The day of the dinner-party has arrived, the guests are assembled, the table is spread with every luxury that wealth can procure to tempt the palate of the sated epicure. Wine sparkles in the cup, and ere the close of the banquet, not only gentlemen, but fair ladies, had partaken of the juice of the grape, until they were scarcely aware of what they uttered. Annie Grayson looked on with pained feelings, resolving, as far as her influence would extend, to repress that tendency to dissipation, which seemed to be increasing among those who should be above the indulgence of such degrading appetites. She has seen the brilliant orator, and elegant scholar, reduced to the lowest state of degradation, by intoxication. And this love of drink had been acquired at these expensive banquets.

Whilst many of the guests were boisterous, Clementina, who

was seated beside Frederick, was busy with the thought of engrossing his attention. After conversing with him some time, she remarked, as if casually :

Mr. Leroux, we have seen but little of you in society of late ; I thought you were perhaps about to turn recluse, and renounce the pleasures of life."

"No, I only withdrew for a time, that I might renew, by communing with my own spirit, the purer, better feelings of my nature ; for, by being constantly engaged in the pursuit of light pleasures, the soul naturally loses that purity which assimilates man to the heavenly beings, and that elevation of sentiment which calls forth the highest aspirations of his nature, and he becomes the slave of debasing appetites and ignoble passions."

As he concluded his remark, he cast his eyes around the table, as much as to say, here is a proof of the truth of what I have said.

Clementina understood his glance, and replied :

"It is to be regretted that those who belong to the best society, should so far forget themselves as to indulge in excess ; but yet that is no reason why persons should deny themselves the pleasures of society, because some who mingle in it, fall beneath our standard of what society should be. But we will not discuss this matter now ; call to-morrow evening, and let us have a game of chess. There is something rational in that."

"You will excuse me, but I have become indifferent to chess playing."

"We will have some music."

"Even that cannot attract me."

"What does interest you ?"

"Reading, study, thought."

"You are about to turn philosopher, I presume."

"I have some such thought, and the first subject I intend to investigate and analyze, will be the heart of a woman of fashion."

"That will be an intricate subject ; and if you should be able to thoroughly understand it, you will rival Solomon himself in wisdom."

Ere the dinner had come to a close, Clementina, with her quick

perception of character, was convinced that she could never again exert an influence over the aristocratic and rich Southron. She could not divine the cause, for she was not aware that her utter heartlessness and want of feeling were known to him. Although she knew not the cause, she was convinced of the fact, and resolved to waste no more smiles and fine speeches on him.

When they returned home in the evening, Mr. Grayson observed his daughter was more than usually thoughtful. And to his inquiry as to the cause, she replied :

"I was thinking of asking a favor of you."

"What is it, my darling? you know I never refuse you anything."

"But this is something more than common."

"It shall be granted, cost what it may."

"It will not cost anything."

"Well, what is it?"

"That you will dispense with wine at your next dinner party."

"That is an uncommon request; but what put such an idea into your head?"

"The witnessing of an indulgence in wine drinking to such an excess, that it amounted to actual intoxication, at the dinner parties of these who are deemed the first in society. We look upon the poor drunken loafer in the street, with loathing. And is drunkenness less debasing, because it is occasioned by sipping wine at a gentleman's table?"

"But custom has rendered it necessary to have wine; it is considered an indispensable part of the feast."

"Yet, is it not better to violate a custom that has so injurious an effect, than to conform to it?"

"True, it would be much better, but then to do so would subject one to unpleasant remark."

"To remark it might subject you; but the usages of society are such, that how much so ever our guests might be surprised at the absence of wine on your table, they would not betray it by word or look. I am sure you are not one to be deterred from doing what you conceive to be right, on account of what a babbling world may say. I look upon this wine drinking as a

very great evil, and the more so because it is so insidious in its advances. I have myself observed gentleman, who came here from different parts of the Union as members of the national legislature: when they first came here, they would scarcely take a glass of wine; but in time, by being frequenters of dinner parties, they would contract a fondness for wine, and I believe to this cause is to be attributed those disgraceful scenes that some times occur in the halls of Congress, among those who should shed honor upon their positions, instead of bringing disgrace upon them. Every debauch a man indulges in, lessens, in some degree, his self-respect, and his respect for his country. And what is worse still, it is at these dinners ladies also take so much wine, that they descend from that purity and sacredness that should characterize our sex."

"Why, my little daughter should turn temperance lecturer! She is really eloquent."

"Father dear, do not ridicule me, I am seriously earnest in what I am saying."

"Well, my darling, I feel the truth of what you say, but am reluctant to grant your request."

However, Annie with her earnest persuasion, prevailed on her father to discard wine from his table, and he gave her the money he designed spending for its purchase, to distribute in charity. And how much better its use.—If woman will only be true to her better nature, how unbounded her influence for good. If she would listen less to the promptings of vanity, a weakness said to belong peculiarly to her, many of the foibles that now mar the beauty of her character would be avoided.

Whilst Annie was ever busy in alleviating the distress, and soothing the sorrows of others, her own heart grew sad in her bosom, for she had heard through various channels, that Edwin Stanmore, who was regarded as one of the most promising and talented young men of the West, was about to wed an accomplished and beautiful lady of St. Louis. She loved Edwin with a depth and devotedness, such as only the good and true are capable of feeling. Yet, she had never permitted herself to analyze the feelings with which she regarded him. But when she heard

he was about to wed another, she was made aware that every bright hope of the future had been interwoven with thoughts of him. It was like a rude awakening from a pleasant dream, but she did not faint, nor yield to frenzied despair, according to the most approved manner of novel heroines. Yet, when she retired to her own room, she recalled the past, with its happy memories and sweet associations, then looked to the future, breathing a prayer for strength to bear her crushed hopes without despondency. Despite her efforts, there were times when an overpowering sadness would creep over her spirits; but instead of yielding to it, she would visit some suffering fellow creature, and lose a sense of her own sorrow in sympathy for the woes of others.

But let us leave Washington for a time, and transport our readers to the sanctum of the Quincy editor. He is absorbed in a deep reverie. Of what is he thinking? Perhaps of some brilliant editorial that will add to the reputation he has already acquired, as a superior writer. Or, it may be, he is meditating some political manœuvre that will advance the interests of his party, and secure to himself political advancement. No, no, it is not of these he is thinking. But let us listen, for he gives utterance to the thoughts that are passing through his mind:

"I would that I had breathed my love to Annie when I last visited Washington; perchance, if she knew my heart's long cherished deep devotion, it would call forth a corresponding sentiment in her bosom. But my pride restrained me; I wished to attain a position that, even her vain, haughty mother might not look down upon. I trust another year it will be attained. I have every reason to believe I will be chosen to represent my district in the halls of Congress. That has been the aim of my life since boyhood, and it was love of Annie that nerved me to pursue it so untiringly.

"Yet, ere that time, she may be the bride of another, and then success would scarce be worth possessing. Oh, how I have worshiped her, and she is worthy of the noblest heart's adoration. She has been the leading star of my life. And with what kindness her sympathy has been given in every sorrow. With such an angel ever by my side, earth would be a paradise."

Thus, we see, whilst Annie was endeavoring to efface his image from her heart, because she thought his love was given to another, every hope of happiness, that was cherished by him, centered in her; and, could she have known it, she would have been spared many sad hours. Her step became less elastic, and her cheek grew a shade paler, but none noted it, save Eulalie Dupré. She noted it, and divined the cause; for she had observed, during the few days that Edwin had remained at home after she became an inmate of his mother's house, that, in his presence, Annie's cheek assumed a brighter glow, and her voice a softer tone; and, having loved herself, she knew how to interpret these symptoms. Had Annie trusted herself to speak of Edwin with as much freedom as she had formerly done, she would have been undeceived with regard to his rumored marriage. But she never breathed his name; and Mrs. Stanmore, who supposed she had ceased to feel an interest in his success, did not as she had been in the habit of doing, read his letters to her. This, Annie supposed, was caused by the letters referring to his marriage; and she was glad that Mrs. Stanmore did not read them to her, for she felt that she would not have endured to listen to the reading of such a letter. Notwithstanding her true piety, and her endeavor to keep herself actively engaged, she, at times, felt that life was a weariness, and she would gladly sleep in the quiet of the grave, beside Ella, the playmate of her childhood. Although she did not entertain these thoughts willingly, the deepest remorse would seize her, that she had permitted them to enter her heart, for she deemed it a murmuring against the dispensation of God. How much of unhappiness, in this life, arises from misapprehension.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE BROKEN ENGAGEMENT.

It is a drear, cold morning. The fast-falling snow almost darkens the light of day, whilst the chill wintry winds sweep through the streets and avenues, sending a feeling of sad foreboding to the heart of the toil-worn widowed mother, as she looks upon her thinly-clad children, and scant supply of fuel. Winter, which is the time of trial and suffering to the poor, is the season of mirth and pleasure to the wealthy.

Mrs. Parkinson and her two nieces are comfortably seated in her luxurious parlor, discussing a party they had attended the previous evening. Clementina, who happened to be in an amiable mood, actually condescended to chat pleasantly, when she had no auditors but the members of her own family.

It is a singular fact, but nevertheless true, that many of those angelic creatures, who nightly assemble in the brilliantly-lighted saloons, making them almost a paradise, with their sweet strains of music, witching smiles, and softly-murmured poetic thoughts, use their entire supply of amiability for these occasions, leaving none for home consumption. Fathers and mothers are regarded by them as mere conveniences to furnish them with money, and keep their French-worked finery in visiting order. As for younger brothers and sisters, they are annoyances that have no right to an existence; and if they happen to intrude themselves into that part of the house sacred to Miss and her visitors, they receive a box on the ears that sends them reeling, and perhaps squealing from the room. Clementina belongs to this class, but on this morning she was in an unusual mood. What has had such a

kindly influence upon her? Let us listen to her conversation; perhaps we may learn.

"Aunt, how did you like the appearance of the gentleman who waited on me at supper last evening?"

"He is a fine-looking man."

"I have made a conquest of him; he is perfectly fascinated."

"Who is he?"

"Judge C——, a new member from one of the Western States; and I see, by Mrs. Royal's notice of him in her last week's paper, that he is unmarried and very wealthy. So, upon the whole, I think it quite a feather in my cap, to make a conquest of him. Rich, intellectual, and a member of Congress."

"A member of Congress," repeated Jenny. "It seems to me, you Washington people think nobody but members of Congress are worth a thought. Well, well, we have hundreds of men at home, just as good as those we send to Congress, and perhaps better than some of them; for, it is not always the man who possesses the most merit that comes to Congress, but he who has the gift of electioneering to the most advantage; and sometimes they stoop to little trickery that a real gentleman will not descend to. Now, just fancy one of your finely dressed, dignified Congressmen, who makes such a display as he promenades the Avenue, seated in a rude log cabin, with a dirty-faced, ragged youngster sitting upon each knee, he pulling a handkerchief from his pocket, and brushing a little of the dirt from about their chops, so that he can kiss them without its producing the effect of an emetic, declaring all the time they are the sweetest little darlings he ever saw; or, in canvassing the district, he may, toward night fall, happen upon some comfortable farm house, where there are two or three grown up daughters, sprightly, industrious, sensible girls, and the father, of course, very proud of them. Our would-be Congressman, who wants the vote of the old man, sets about playing the agreeable to the daughters, as the surest way of securing it. But he does not play the agreeable by quoting poetry, going into ecstasies over the last new song, or almost expiring with delight at the recollection of the latest polka, as he would do were he addressing a city belle.

Oh, no, this is not the mode to be pursued here. He would be considered an upstart, conceited jackanapes, unworthy the vote of any sensible man. But, if one of the girls happen to be paring a basket of apples for sauce, for the next morning's meal, he will call for a knife, and assist her; and, instead of discussing the merits of the last new novel, he will ask her how many yards of cloth she can weave in a day, how much butter and cheese they make during the summer, with other such topics of conversation. When the hour for milking arrives, he will accompany them to the cow lot; and when the calves have obtained their quantum of milk, he will seize the calf by the ears, and drag it into its own pasture. A fine tableau, to see one of these starched gentlemen dragging a calf by the ears, whilst the farmer's daughters, who understand the philosophy of penning a calf without any effort, stand by, much amused at his violent exertion. Nor are they so unqualified to converse upon intellectual subjects, as the conversation he addresses to them presupposes. You must not always judge by appearances, in these backwoods places. You may see a girl dressed in her home-spun dress, the product of her own industry, yet her mind is stored with useful knowledge; she is acquainted with the current literature of the day, which she gathers from newspapers, besides being familiar with all the incidents of ancient and modern history, that are worth noting. However, there is a good reason why it should be so; for there, reading is a recreation, and the mind becomes interested in the acquisition of knowledge. Whereas, here, in the city, there are so many things to divert the mind from its attainment, that, as a natural consequence, the girls grow up light-minded, and deriving pleasure from trifling pursuits.

"One evening, it is the theatre, the next, a concert, or a party, a ball, or something else, keeping the mind in a constant whirl of excitement, leaving not a moment to anything, but dress and amusement."

"Bravo," exclaimed Clementina, "you have made quite a speech, but ere its close you deviated considerably from the subject on which you commenced."

"That is true, but when I speak of the West, it always calls

up pictures of simple quiet enjoyment, that makes me forgetful that others do not take the same interest in them that I do."

The usual mocking spirit seemed to possess Clementina, for she replied :

"Your representation of the mental cultivation of your country lasses, does not correspond with what you were, when you came to the city. But to do you justice, I must admit you have improved marvelously for the length of time you have been here."

The quick blood mounted to Jenny's cheek, and she was about to reply in a hasty manner, but repressed the angry words that rose to her lips, and answered :

"I possessed less opportunity for improvement than the daughters of the better class of farmers. We were poor, and father never took anything but a political paper. Most farmers throughout the West, take a literary paper."

Just at this moment the bell rang, and as Jenny did not feel any interest in the visitors who usually called upon her brilliant cousin, she quietly slipped out of the room. The visitor, on this morning, happened to be Judge Call, the new member, who had been so much pleased with Clementina the previous evening. And the morning's call increased the admiration with which he already regarded her. She exerted herself to please, and she seldom failed to do so when she wished. Oh, that some guardian spirit would whisper into his ear :—Beware ! Did you but know the life-enduring desolation her wiles have caused in one heart, you would tremble for your own future happiness.

Judge Call is a noble-souled, honorable-minded man. After his election, ere his departure from his Western home to attend to his new duties in the federal city, he had obtained the promise of a gentle girl, whom he had long wooed, to become his bride immediately after his return. They had long loved each other with the most devoted attachment, but the haughty mother, who was a widow, would not suffer her daughter to receive his addresses ; because she thought her great beauty would enable her to make, what she termed, a better match. The fair Helen was exceedingly beautiful, and her mother would frequently remark, when her companions rallied her on the devotion of the

Judge, that her daughter must marry some one whose position would enable him to introduce her to Washington society; for, she had no idea that her beauty should not be known beyond the precincts of a country town. These words being repeated to the Judge, he resolved he would obtain a seat in Congress, if that was to be the terms on which he would obtain the hand of her whom he loved. He became an active politician, was elected to the state legislature, where the course he pursued was so popular, that he succeeded in getting into Congress much sooner than he anticipated. He now felt, that he had a right to claim the hand of Helen. Now that fortune commenced smiling on his efforts, she seemed inclined to shower favors on him; for, a rich old uncle, who would not render him the slightest assistance whilst he was struggling to obtain an education and his profession, now determined to make him his heir, and actually made a will in his favor, just in time to accomplish this design. For he died of apoplexy a few days after it was signed and sealed. He was now deemed one of the best matches in the state, and Mrs. Jones was proud to have it known, that he was the acknowledged suitor of her daughter. This was the state of things when he left for Washington.

He was first attracted to Clementina by her resemblance to his Helen. This resemblance was only in personal appearance, for his affianced was all that was artless and pure minded, whilst Clementina was the most consummate actor. It seemed the very contrast of character fascinated him, for ere the close of the session, she had drawn from him an avowal of love; notwithstanding, the image of Helen still lay nestling in the depths of his heart. As the time approached for his return home, he grew restless and miserable. Waking and sleeping, two images seemed to haunt him, that of Clementina mocking and triumphant, that of Helen touchingly sad. When he arrived at home, he called immediately at Mrs. Jones', hoping the smile of Helen would restore to him those happy feelings which he had always experienced in her presence. To his surprise, he learned she was absent on a visit to some distant friends. She was sent for immediately; but several days elapsed before she arrived, and dur-

ing that period, his friends observed that he acted strangely, but supposed it was caused by disappointment at not finding Helen at home. When he called on her after her return, he was strangely agitated; there was a wildness in his manner bordering on insanity. She had felt for some time, from the tone of his letters, that a change had come over him, and when she met him she was convinced her surmises were true. It at once occurred to her that in his associations at Washington he had met some lady whose charms and accomplishments had caused him to wish to be free from his engagement to her, and, with that straight forward simplicity which always characterized her, she said to him :

"For some time past, I have been unhappy ; it seemed a spirit voice whispered to my heart that your love, which was the light of my life, had been withdrawn from me. If it be true, you are released from your engagement."

"I do not wish to be released from my engagement; I am here to fulfil it. Let our marriage be consummated immediately."

Helen gazed into his face with a penetrating earnestness, as if she would read every emotion of his heart, whilst she said :

"Your answer does not content me. You say, 'Let our marriage take place;' but if there is a voice whose tones make sweeter music to your ear, and an eye whose glance seems brighter, then would I not wed you for worlds. A voice whispers me such is the case. I entreat you to speak frankly to me. Show me your heart as was your wont to do in happy days gone by. I feel that there is something in it that I do not know."

"Oh, Helen, I am wretched, miserably wretched ! I have not ceased to love you ; but I labor under some strange hallucination. In Washington I met a lady, the counterpart of yourself in appearance, yet all unlike you. She is gifted and accomplished beyond any person I have ever met. She exercised over my senses a kind of bewildering spell, that I cannot comprehend."

"'Tis true—I knew 'twas true !" exclaimed Helen, "and no phantasy, produced by lowness of spirits, on account of your absence. Go, wed this beautiful and accomplished being, and

be happy. I will learn to forget the bright dreams I had cherished."

"No, Helen, that cannot be. At the bare thought of abandoning you and uniting my destiny to hers, I feel as if fiends were searing my brain with red hot iron. No, no; let us be married immediately, and then I shall regain that quiet happiness which your presence ever casts around me."

"Not so; the dream is past—I can never be your bride," was the low reply, in a voice so full of woe, you would deem it the wail of a breaking heart. But Helen's heart did not break, for she was a strong-minded woman; yet, the sudden blighting of those long cherished hopes, caused her a fit of sickness that brought her near to the grave, and from which she recovered to learn that Judge C. was the inmate of a mad-house. The rose never bloomed again on her cheek, nor did she ever get married; but she lived to be a blessing to the poor and suffering. Wherever you heard of sickness, there you would see Helen Jones, holding the cooling draught to the parched lips, or bathing the fevered brow of the sufferer. Seldom was she heard warbling glad strains of music to gratify the joyous and gay, but often was her exquisite voice heard chanting the sweet and comforting hymn beside the sick and sorrowing. She was an angel of mercy on earth! This course chafed the proud spirit of her mother, and there were not persons wanting to say it was a judgment on her, for her opposition to Helen's marriage with Judge C. ere he attained wealth and station. When her mother would reproach her for wasting her youth thus, she would reply gently—

"Mother, the youth of my heart has passed away, and the only pleasure I enjoy is derived from imparting solace to my fellow beings: do permit me to indulge in this pleasure."

Thus adjured, she would leave her to pursue her own wishes. Judge C. died in the lunatic asylum to which his friends consigned him. He perished in the opening of a brilliant career, a victim to the wiles of an accomplished and heartless coquette.

It is much to be regretted that such sirens are sometimes still to be met with in the gay society of Washington. And they

cast their witching spells around any who may come within their circle, perfectly indifferent whether the gentlemen are married or unmarried so they elicit their admiration and secure their attention, to wait upon them to balls, assemblies, and other places of amusement.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE LEVEE.

WHEN Jenny retired to her own room, she thought of her cousin's words with something like bitterness in her heart. She thought of Clementina's easy graceful manners, her extraordinary mental attainments, which fascinated all who came within her influence; and a feeling almost akin to envy, for the first time, arose in her bosom. Communing with herself, she said:

"Why should I feel thus? Would I exchange with her, taking her heartlessness and selfishness, with her accomplishments and intellectual superiority? No, no, I do not covet the admiration of the crowd; I would rather have the love of one honest, noble heart, and be worthy of that love, than the mere admiration of all the distinguished men of Washington. There is a heartlessness about it, that is like a sealed book to an untrained country girl. And I am glad it is so. This exchanging of complimentary phrases without feeling what you say, is not in accordance with nature. Oh, it is a blessed thing to live in the country, and have the heart expanded and made capable of loving with truth and earnestness all that is worthy of our love, by looking on the beautiful face of nature as it came from the hand of its Creator! But in the city, from infancy, children are taught, that the great end and aim of life is to attract admiration; consequently, they become selfish."

This train of thought was interrupted by the entrance of her aunt, who sat and conversed with her some time; for her unselfish and self sacrificing disposition was making its impression on

Mrs. Parkinson. She found it very pleasant to hear Jenny say, in her sweet affectionate way, when she came in from calling or shopping, and felt warm or fatigued: "Aunt, sit in this easy chair, and let me take your things and fan you." Or, when she read anything that interested her, she would take the book or paper into her aunt's room, saying: "Dear aunt, here is something so interesting, do let me read it to you."

When Mrs. Parkinson entered the room, she observed Jenny looked more thoughtful than usual, and placing her hand on her head, she said:

"Child, what makes you look so grave?"

"I was just thinking of the difference between Clementina and myself. I don't wonder that she thinks I am rough and uncouth."

"Never mind, you know I promised you to send you to the Academy at Georgetown, and you will have an opportunity of becoming polished as she. But I do not know that it is best for girls to get too much knowledge; it makes them regardless of every one, unless it is some learned person like themselves. Now, here you will fan me and read to me, or go and take a drive with me whenever I propose it, whether you feel like riding or not. But if you were learned like Clementina, you would be like her, unwilling to waste your time in driving about to gratify an old woman's whim."

"Never fear, aunt; I think if I were indebted to your kindness for an education, I should feel under the greater obligation to devote my attention to you, to repay you for your generosity."

"You think so now, but you will change."

"Try me."

"Well, I'll do so. You may go to school as soon as you please."

"Then, let it be next Monday."

"If you wish it, we will go to-morrow and see the sisters, and make the arrangements."

"That is a dear good aunt," said she, kissing her affectionately.

As the rays of the sun falling on the ice will, in time, melt it,

so Jenny's constant kindness was melting the pride and selfishness from about Mrs. Parkinson's heart; and she kindly returned the caress, and left Jenny alone. When her aunt had left her, she took out her writing materials, and wrote a letter home; and, as some of her notions are somewhat original, we will give the letter for the amusement of our readers:

MY DEAR BROTHERS,

When I wrote you last, I said, in my next, I would write to you about the Congress, and so I will; but I must tell you, first, that I am going to school, and I will learn to play on the piano, and all these fine things that are considered necessary to make a lady. I think I hear you exclaim: "Oh, fudge! what will our Jenny do with such fine lady notions and learning, when she gets back home? I suppose she will be taking airs on herself, and turn up her nose at us and our plain neighbors." But, if you think so, you are altogether mistaken. I have seen enough of this turning up of noses since I have been in Washington, to find out that it does not add to the beauty of the lady, or the dignity of the gentleman.

Why, here you will see some young jackanapes, who has rubbed his back against college walls, and whose person is clothed in fine broad cloth, perhaps at the expense of the merchant, with his dainty hand encased in white kid gloves, making a display of himself on the Avenue, and if he happens to meet an honest industrious merchant, or tradesman, who is a useful member of society, and possessing every attribute that constitutes a gentleman, yet, he will turn up his nose, and perhaps level his quizzing glass at him, as if to examine what kind of a being he is. I have become so perfectly disgusted with such airs, that there is no danger that I will ever take any upon myself.

But I suppose you think I will finish my letter without saying anything about Congress. I am going to tell you about that, now. The first time I went to the Capitol, I went to the Senate, and was very much interested in looking at the grave Senators, as they sat in their seats, and in listening to their speeches. My next visit was to the House of Representatives.

When I took my seat in the gallery and looked down on the floor, it put me in mind of a school of big boys when the master was absent, for they seemed to be engaged in anything but making laws for the government of a great nation, judging from their appearance. One man, I supposed was making a speech, for he stood in one place and gesticulated violently. The others were some of them, walking about, talking to each other, whilst some were writing, and a small number were reading the newspapers. I could not hear a word the individual standing on the floor said, save, when he bawled at the top of his voice, "Mr. Speaker," and I presume no one else did, for no one seemed to try to hear but myself. The ladies in the gallery were chatting to the gentlemen by whom they were accompanied, or smiling and bowing to members on the floor. These speeches made in the House of Representatives, are seldom listened to by the members themselves, or visitors; but they are printed and sent through the country for the enlightenment of the constituents of the honorable gentlemen, to let them know what giant statesmen they are. My private opinion is, that it would be a great saving of time, money, and lungs, if they would just have the speeches printed, and sent round through the country, without speaking them in Congress. And then, it would be the means of preventing these quarrels and fights, which sometimes take place in the Hall of Representatives; which is setting a very bad example to the people, to say nothing of the pulled hair, and slapped jaws of the honorable gentlemen themselves. However, I'll not say any more about Congress in this letter, but say something about the levees at the President's. I believe, I told you in a former letter, that the house of the President was thrown open once every week, and every one that wished, had liberty to go there to see the President and his family. A great many persons go there, but not so many to see the President as to show themselves. After speaking to the President, visitors generally go into the east room and promenade round it. Those who do not wish to promenade, can take a seat on the chairs and sofas, that are ranged along the sides of the room, and watch the gay crowd as they pass before them. I usually take a seat and amuse myself by

noting the different styles of dress, and different expressions of countenance of the crowd as they move round before me. For the life of me, whenever I look at them marching round the room, time after time, I cannot help thinking of Tom Pike's old brown horse, moving round in the same path all day, to propel the machinery to grind tan-bark for the use of his tan-yard.

Speaking of tan-bark, puts me in mind of leather, and that reminds me of an incident that is said to have occurred at a levee some years since. A very worthy gentleman, a resident of a neighboring city, whose occupation was that of shoemaker, by his industry, honest integrity, and excellent moral character, so won the confidence and respect of his fellow citizens, that they elected him mayor of the city. One evening whilst he was mayor, he and his family attended a levee. The son was a fine manly youth, full of energy and enterprise. The daughter a beautiful interesting girl that had just burst into womanhood. They had been promenading, and were standing at one side of the room, observing the brilliant throng, when a lady who made great pretension to gentility, gave her head a toss, and cast a supercilious glance at them, saying in a tone sufficiently loud to reach their ears, which she intended it should do. "Don't you smell shoemaker's wax!"

The brow of the young girl crimsoned, for she felt it was meant as an insult; but the lip of the brother curled with contempt, and his eye flashed fire, whilst he said :

"Do not mind her, sis; our father earns a competence by the honest labor of his hands, and has the respect of all who know him; whilst hers is enabled to deck her in satins and jewels, by pursuing an avocation in which no high-minded honorable man will engage. But never mind, if I live, I will attain a position that will place me on an equality with the proudest."

And he has made his words good. He is now one of the wealthiest bankers in the city. Foreign ministers, members of the Cabinet, with the scientific and intellectual, sit at his board. He is the patron of the fine arts, and paintings of the most celebrated masters decorate his walls; but the same good sense which marked the course of his father is a characteristic of his

career. His urbanity of manner wins the respect of all who have intercourse with him, and his liberality in relieving the poor is proverbial. The most aristocratic ladies in the city are happy to mingle in the dance beneath the light of his chandeliers, and invitations to his parties are sought with avidity. The lady who made the remark that wounded the feelings of his sister and roused his spirit, the first time she met him at the President's, still mingles in, and strives to be a leader in fashionable society. He meets her frequently at the houses of mutual friends. She is very assiduous in courting the attention of the rich banker; he is exceedingly polite to her, but has never invited her to his house. She asks one of her friends, who is very intimate with the banker, to procure her an invitation to a large party which is to be given by him during the month. The request is made by the friend, and the invitation sent, but it is enclosed in a note of the following import:

"FAIR LADY,

"A mutual friend intimated to me, that you would condescend to honor my mansion with your presence, if you should receive an invitation to my next party. Enclosed you will find the invitation. You would have been an invited guest at my house, long ere this, but knowing the delicacy of your olfactory nerves, I feared they might be offended with the 'smell of shoemaker's wax.'

"Yours, with profound respect,

"_____."

When the lady read the note, she crushed it in her hand, exclaiming:

"I wish my tongue had been blistered ere I made that unlucky speech; but I've got the invitation, and I'll go. Nobody will know any thing of the ungracious note accompanying it, and it will make some of my dear friends half die with envy, to know that I was at this great party, which is looked upon as the party of the season."

So you see some ladies are not very particular how an invitation is procured, so they get it.

"I must stop writing, for I have made my letter too long already; but I know you will not tire in reading a letter from your affectionate sister

"JENNY."

When Jenny had finished her letter, she went about preparing her things for school, with her heart full of happy thoughts of home, and bright anticipations of the future. She noted not the lapse of time, until she heard the dinner bell ring. She then hastily brushed her hair and arranged her dress, for her aunt was very particular about her appearance at the dinner table, and was hurrying through the hall to the dining-room, when she heard the following words in tones piercingly sorrowful:

"Oh, for mercy's sake, do not drive me away without permitting me to see some of the family!"

"Clear out, Missus never encourages beggars," was the reply of the servant, and she was about to close the door, but Jenny stopped, saying:

"What is it, Ann?"

"Why, here is a poor white child, wants to be troubling Missus."

Jenny stepped to the door and saw standing on the steps a little girl about twelve years old, thinly clad, and almost perished with cold. She did not stop to ask her any questions, but took her by the hand and led into the parlor, where a cheerful fire blazed in the grate, telling her to sit down and warm herself, and then tell her what she wanted. Jenny did not think what her aunt or proud cousin would say, to see a miserably clad child in this elegant parlor; nor did she think of her dinner; she only thought of the little sad, pale face, that looked so beseechingly into her eyes. When she had warmed her almost frozen hands, she asked her what she wanted. The child raised her eyes to Jenny's face, saying:

"Indeed, indeed lady, I never begged before. When father was alive, we had a nice house and everything we wanted, but when he died, we had to leave it, for mother and sister Lixie could not earn enough to pay for it, so we had to go to a poor

little house that we get for four dollars a month. Whilst mother kept well, we got along well enough, and always had the money to pay the rent at the end of the month. But mother has been sick this winter, not able to sew, and sister Lizzie works every night till midnight. When our rent was due yesterday, we had no money to pay it. Our landlord said we might stay till tomorrow, and if we had not the money then, he would turn us out of doors. Mother begged him to let us remain a few days, but he said his tenants seemed to think because he owned houses, they must be allowed to live in them rent free, and if he would listen to their complaints, he would soon not have a house to cover his own head. If such should ever be the case, I trust he will find a landlord with more generosity than is found in his bosom. This morning, Lizzie went to her employer and begged him to advance her enough money to pay our rent, but he refused, telling her if she troubled him to advance money, he would not give her any more work. When she came home and told mother, she said, 'Let them put us into the street, for the chill blasts of winter are not so cold as the heart of man to his fellow being.' But she looked so sorrowful, and Lizzie cried as if her heart would break, so I slipped out and thought I would try if I could not beg some money. This is the first house I have stopped at. Oh, do give me something; if the rich only knew how much the poor suffer, I am sure they would not drive them from their doors with unkind words."

"What is the amount of rent due?" asked Jenny.

"Four dollars."

"Only four dollars! and for that amount a wealthy man would turn a sick woman and her orphan children into the street, to perish with cold! Surely, no one bearing the image of man can be so heartless."

"Mother says, money is his God."

"I fear it will not serve him in the hour of his greatest need; he will perhaps, then, learn what it is to beg for money, and be refused. Here are two dollars, all I have, but you are welcome to it."

The children took the money, saying:

"Oh, you are an angel of kindness, to not only give me money, but to speak so kindly to me. May you never know what it is to want."

"Tell me where you live, and I will come to see you; I may be able to assist you more."

The child gave the required direction, that she might find her home, and then left, thanking Jenny with tears in her eyes, for her generosity.

Jenny then went to her dinner, but could eat nothing, for thinking of the poor child, and its sick mother.

When they had finished their meal, and gone into the parlor, Jenny told her aunt of the poor child, to whom she had given her two dollars, and asked her aunt to add two more to it, and let her go and take it to them, that they might be able to pay their rent, when the landlord called again.

Mrs. Parkinson, though not much inclined to exercise the virtue of charity, was prevailed on by Jenny to give her some money for the relief of this suffering family. In the joy of her heart, she carried it immediately to them. When she arrived at their humble and scantily furnished abode, and saw the sick woman lying on a poor bed, whilst the daughter was seated by a few coals, that barely sufficed to keep her fingers from becoming stiff with cold, sewing busily, she mentally exclaimed :

"Is it possible, there exists a man so devoid of every feeling of humanity, as to use harsh and threatening words to these suffering women, for the paltry sum of four dollars! If that is the effect of riches on the heart, may I continue as I am."

At the sound of her footfall, the little girl to whom she had given the money, and who was also engaged in sewing, raised her head, and a smile passed over her pale face, as she said :

"Oh, Lizzie, this is the kind lady who gave me money to-day."

Lizzie, a pale, delicate looking girl, rose from her work, and offered her a seat, saying :

"Fair lady, you know not from what despair your generous gift has raised us. Although it is not the whole amount due to our landlord, I think when we pay him that sum, he will permit us to remain two weeks longer; and, by that time, if my mother

grows no worse," and her voice sank to a whisper, and a tear moistened her cheek, "I trust, I shall be able to pay him the full amount."

"I have brought you the amount, and something more, to procure some comforts for your sick mother."

"May Heaven's choicest blessing rest on your head. I am sure my mother will soon be well, when her mind is relieved from the dread of being thrown in the street, and she has something to nourish her; for the disease has left her: she is only too weak to sit up."

Jenny approached the bed, and found it was true. She was suffering more from debility than disease, and what she needed to restore her, was a mind at ease, and wholesome food. She remained some time, and conversed in a cheerful manner, promising to call frequently. When she left, she had implanted a feeling of hopefulness in the hearts of that oppressed family, to which they had been strangers for many a day. And Jenny experienced a feeling of truer happiness than the hard hearted landlord could even conceive of. This is no fancy sketch; such incidents are of frequent recurrence in Washington, and, no doubt, in other large cities, where the desire to possess immense wealth is so great, that it chokes up every generous feeling of the heart.

CHAPTER XX.

THE REJECTED PROPOSAL.

THE winter, with its gayeties, had passed away; and the gentle breezes of spring, laden with the perfume of flowers, steal through the window, and fan the cheek of Annie Grayson, as she sits in her own chamber, in a musing mood. She had been so absorbed in thought, that she had not noted the lapse of time, and was not aware the shades of twilight were gathering round her, till a servant rapped at the door, bringing a message from her father, saying, he wished to see her a few moments in the library.

She immediately went to him. When she entered the library, he said :

"Come, darling, take a seat by me, and listen to what I have to say."

She drew a footstool to his feet; and, seating herself on it, looked affectionately into his face, saying :

"Father, I am all attention; what is it you have to say?"

He placed his hand on her curls, as he had often done in childhood, and continued :

"Would you like to be married?"

"What a singular question, father. Are you tired of your daughter?"

"No; but I have had a proposal for your hand to-day, from one who is worthy of you."

"Who is it, father?"

"The Marquis of B——"

"I am sorry for it. I esteem the Marquis, but—"

"But what, my child?"

"I do not love him."

"It is not expected you should give your love unasked : it would be unmaidenly. He asks the privilege of wooing and winning you."

"Father, say to him I appreciate the honor he does me, but I am so happy with my parents, I would remain with them."

"But, my daughter, you will not always remain with us ; and the Marquis is not only possessed of those intellectual and moral qualities that would make him a worthy companion, but his rank would place a coronet on your brow, and give you a place among the highest nobility of France."

"Father," said Annie, in a voice almost reproachful, "I am surprised to hear you, an American by birth, and a Senator by your own merit, which honor was bestowed on you by your generous countrymen, on account of that merit, mention title and rank, as recommendations that should have any weight with your daughter, in her choice of a husband. I could have expected such a thing from my mother, but not from you. It is this weakness that makes foreigners ridicule us. They say, and with too much truth, that whilst we are always boasting of our republican institutions and our democracy, there is no people in the world who run after titled foreigners with so much eagerness."

"There is too much truth in what you say, and I stand reproved of my folly in mentioning rank and title as an inducement to prevail on you to regard favorably the suit of the Marquis. But he possesses qualities that render him worthy of you, independent of these, and he loves you devotedly."

"I regret that it is so, for if ever I wed, it will be one of my own countrymen."

"Well, my daughter, I only wish to see you happy ; I know your affections will not be bestowed on one unworthy of you, and whomsoever you may choose will be approved by me."

"Thank you, my father, for your confidence in my judgment : you shall find it is not misplaced. You will speak to the Marquis, and tell him I decline the honor he would do me."

When Annie left the library, she went to the parlor, where she found her cousin Fred awaiting her.

"Well, cousin," said he, "have you forgotten your promise to go round with me, and spend the evening with Mrs. Stanmore and Eulalie?"

"Oh no, I have not forgotten it, for it is such a relief to spend a quiet evening in rational conversation, after the constant excitement of mingling with the gay and pleasure-seeking crowd with which I am brought constantly in contact! And the pleasure they seek, what is it?—the gratifying of their own selfish tastes, regardless of the feelings of a fellow-being."

"Well, coz, do not stop to philosophize, but let us go to see our friends."

In a moment, Annie was ready to accompany her cousin, and they were soon seated in the parlor of Mrs. Stanmore. When Annie had thrown off her shawl, she exclaimed:

"I feel when I get here as if there was an influence about me which tends to restore me to my better self. For, although I do not really enjoy the society to be met in the gay world, yet a constant association with those whose only thought is fashion and dress, will have its effect upon any heart."

"They say," remarked Eulalie, "there is a certain titled gentleman in that gay throng, who has affected your heart very seriously. Is it true?"

"There is about as much truth in it, as is usually found in the rumors of *They say*."

"Then if it be not true, we may hope to prevail on you to go with us to your cousin's beautiful plantation in Louisiana. Oh, how happy I am at the thought of visiting again the bright sunny South!"

"Yes, cousin, you must accompany us; we have planned a delightful tour. We will leave about the first of June, go up the Hudson, from thence the Canada, visiting the beautiful scenery of the St. Lawrence, and that wonder of nature—the falls of Niagara. When we have sufficiently admired the beautiful and sublime scenery of this vicinity, we will cross the lakes and visit Quincy, Illinois, where, as Mrs. Stanmore accompanies us

we must spend some days. And, judging from Edwin's description of the warmed-hearted hospitality of the citizens of the State of boundless prairies and beautiful rivers, we shall not be able to leave there for, at least a month, thus making it Autumn, before we shall reach our own home. Is not that a route sufficiently attractive to induce you to accompany us?"

"Nothing would give me more pleasure than to form one of your party, but as this is the long session, and Congress may not adjourn till August, I fear my parents will not be willing to permit me to leave them.

"If you will go, I will procure the consent of your parents," said her cousin.

"You must not refuse us," said Mrs. Stanmore. "Edwin writes me, he has purchased a beautiful home, and he wishes me to come and take charge of his housekeeping. It will be so pleasant to have you, the dearest friend of Ella, visit me in my new home. Had Ella lived—But I will not murmur."

At the name of Ella, an expression of pain passed over Frederick Leroux's face, and he became silent and thoughtful. He had striven hard to bring himself to think of her loss with calmness; her memory was ever in his thoughts like a haunting spirit, yet he could not hear her name mentioned without betraying emotion. Eulalie, who regarded him with the solicitude of a sister, noted his abstraction, and her thoughts turned to her own withered hopes, causing her also to forget the present, so busy was she with memories of the past, thus, leaving Mrs. Stanmore and Annie to continue the conversation. And so interested was Mrs. Stanmore in speaking of her noble boy, as she called Edwin, and Annie in listening to her praises, that the evening passed rapidly away. Annie had concluded ere she left, if her parents did not object, that she would accompany her friends on their anticipated tour.

The consent of her parents is obtained, and it is but a day or two previous to the one fixed for their departure, when Annie, with a heart in which there was a mingling of sadness and joy, went to make her farewell visits. And where do you suppose those visits were made? Not to the houses of the wealthy, oh

no, but to the humble abodes of those whose sufferings she had relieved during the cold winter months. Whilst she listened to their expressions of thankfulness for her kindness, and regret that she was about to leave the city, her heart was filled with emotion, and she said within herself, to a generous heart there is much to live for, even if our brightest dreams of life should not be realized. When she had bid adieu to all her other friends, she called on Emma Carlton, and told her of the pleasures she anticipated during the summer, expressing a wish that it were possible for her to accompany them.

"For once," replied Emma, "I almost feel tempted to murmur at my lot. Oh, it would be so pleasant to get away from the dust and din of the city. To ramble beneath wide spreading oaks, and listen to the music of the forest warbler in its native groves, whilst the breath of the wild flower makes the atmosphere around redolent with sweets. Yet, I will not murmur, for that would be sinful. Rather should I be thankful that we are all in health, and able to earn a comfortable independence. However I will be with you often in imagination. By-the-by, does a certain French Marquis whom I have heard frequently discussed by my fair customers, accompany you."

"Certainly not; why do you ask?"

"The gossip indulged in by ladies, whilst awaiting the fit of a dress, implied that ere another winter passed, you would be the bride of the titled Frenchman. And, I supposed it probable, he would form one of your party."

"He will not belong to our party, nor will I ever be his bride."

"I am glad of it."

"Why so?"

"If you must know, I have always fancied you and Edwin Stanmore were just suited to each other, and I should like to see that fancy realized. If he has not nobility of title, he has nobility of soul, which is far better."

Whilst Emma was speaking, a bright glow suffused Annie's cheek; but when she had ceased, she replied:

"I did not know you were such a dreamer; but I am sorry to

tell you, your fancy with regard to Edwin and myself can never be realized."

"Why not? you are certainly not one of those who regard Edwin as beneath you, because he has been obliged to earn a place among men by his own unwearied industry and energy. And if he has not had the time to cultivate the elegant accomplishments that please the fancy of the vain belle, nature has bestowed on him an innate politeness, and native grace, that renders him superior, even in that respect, to the polished fopling, who spends his time in loitering in drawing rooms, and making silly speeches to giggling girls, whose minds are vacant as his own."

"No, Emma, I do not regard Edwin the less, because he has been the artificer of his own fortune. Notwithstanding I have been reared in this city, where there is a class of persons who regard those as inferior who are the useful members of society, and contribute to the wealth of our country by their labor, I have none of that littleness about me. But, has gossip not informed you that the talented young editor is to wed an accomplished heiress in St. Louis?"

"It has not; but I should not have believed it, had I heard it."

"And why not believe it?"

"Because, Annie, I noted Edwin closely when he last was in Washington, and he loves you with all the devotedness that a noble heart is capable of feeling."

"No, Emma, Edwin regards me as a sister, and has ever treated me as such."

"He has ever treated you as such, 'tis true; but the feeling with which he regards you is warmer, deeper than ever glowed in bosom of brother for sister. But, although he feels himself equal to any, he knows the world would say you had wed beneath your station were you to become his bride. Therefore, he will never breathe his love, till he attains a position that the world will deem him a fitting match for the peerless Annie Grayson. He has a strong will, and well disciplined mind; he can control the expression of his feelings: but the glance of the eye and the modulation of the voice when he addresses you, betrays

him to one who observed him as closely as I did when I last saw him."

"Well, well, I shall see him during the summer; so I shall watch for those symptoms you describe, and if I can detect any of them, and he seems too diffident to woo me, I shall offer myself to him."

"You may jest about it as you please, but you are the idol of Edwin's heart, and a nobler heart never beat than his."

"None know it better than I, and I do full justice to his noble qualities; but we will not speak of him any longer. I came to bid you good-bye, this evening. To-morrow I shall be occupied, and we leave at six o'clock next morning; so I shall not see you again ere I leave."

"I am almost selfish enough to regret your absence, although I know you will enjoy your tour so much. Of those who were my friends when fortune smiled on me more propitiously, none, save yourself, seem to recognize me as the same being I then was. Whilst Ella lived, she was unchanged; and when you were absent from the city, I still had a friend to call and greet me kindly, and encourage me when I sometimes felt life's tasks were heavy on my young shoulders. But now when you leave, I shall be all alone as it regards a friend of my own age. I am not superstitious, nor disposed to have faith in presentiments; but at the thought of your leaving, there is a weight at my heart and a feeling that I shall need your friendship ere you return to the city."

"If you need a friend in my absence, my father will be ever ready to serve you, for he has a kind heart. I must see your mother and Leila before I go. How does Leila advance in her studies?"

"Rapidly; she is the day-star of my existence. Let me be ever so weary and despondent, when I hear her happy childish laugh, it steals over my spirit like refreshing music. Oh! I shall never murmur whilst I have that angel child, in her innocence and beauty, to shed light on my pathway."

At this moment, Mrs. Carlton and Leila came into the room, and Annie bade adieu to her friends and returned home. Often,

during the evening, she was repeating to herself, "So, Emma thinks he loves me." The thought that this might be true caused her to look forward to her journey with a much happier heart than she otherwise would have done. For, notwithstanding all the blessings fortune had showered on her, she felt her happiness would be incomplete without Edwin's love.

CHAPTER XXI.

A VISIT TO THE SPRINGS.

THE rays of the morning sun had not fallen on the sleeping city, gilding spire and dome with its glad beams, when Annie arose, and habited herself in her traveling costume, that she might be in readiness for her journey. After having performed her morning devotions, she threw open her chamber window, and looked upon the quiet scene. As her eye rested upon it, she involuntary exclaimed :

"How quiet, how still! It seems the spirit of rest enwraps the entire city. The politician rests from the excitements and busy schemes of ambition, with which his brain is busied during the day. The gay belle and woman of fashion no longer think of practicing the most graceful attitudes, that they may acquire an easy grace, that will enable them to win the admiration of all beholders. The weary toil-worn laborer also rests, and it may be, to him is vouchsafed the sweetest and most refreshing rest. No exciting and harassing themes trouble his imagination, playing him wild fantastic tricks, even in slumber. He sleeps, and, perchance, he dreams of that better land, where, the inspired writer says : 'The weary rest from their labors,' of that land where there are no rich, no poor; and he rises strengthened and refreshed to engage in the tasks of the new day."

Just at this moment, a wild bird, from the branches of a tree beside her window, hymned forth its morning carol of gratitude and praise; she raised her eyes reverently to Heaven, and ejaculated :

"Oh, God! how beautiful, how perfect are all thy works; and earth would be a paradise but for the stormy, unbridled passions that rage in the breast of man; and it seems, in cities, those passions acquire a vehemence undreamed of by those who dwell among the quiet and purifying influences of the country."

Ere the bird had finished its matin song, the sunbeams fell upon the topmost branches of the tree in which it had taken shelter, and signs of active life were astir in the city. Annie turned from the window and descended to the parlor, where she found her father already awaiting her. As she entered, he rose from his seat, and drawing her to his bosom imprinted a kiss upon her brow, saying:

"My own darling daughter, you are about to leave us for a long time, and did I not prefer your happiness to my own, I would not permit you to go. My heart will be lonely in your absence."

"Oh, no, father, your public duties will keep you so much occupied, you will have no time for loneliness."

"True, my daughter, I shall be much occupied with my public duties, but the strife, heartlessness, and intrigue, which I frequently have to encounter in public life, make me need the more, the society of my daughter, that I may in her, look upon the fairer side of human nature, and not become disgusted with my species."

The usually glad countenance of Aunt Susie, the cook, now appeared at the door, but it wore a look of sadness, and with a voice tremulous with suppressed feeling, she said:

"Miss Annie, come honey, and take a nice cup of hot coffee afore you goes. I's bin to Master Fred's room an he'll be down in a minit."

"And my mother?"

"I's been to her room, but she says, if she's 'sturbed so airly, she'll have the headache all days, so you kin jist come to her room and tell her good-bye afore you goes."

Annie felt a pang shoot through her heart, at the thought, that her mother felt so indifferent about her departure. And old

Susie shook her head, as much as to say : Missus aint worthy such a child.

Mr. Grayson took Annie's hand and led her to the table, but her heart was so full, she could scarcely swallow a mouthful. Aunt Susie bustled about, poured the coffee, and begged her to take some ham, saying :

"Laws honey, you must eat, 'twill be a long time afore you'll drink a cup of coffee I makes. Oh dear, oh dear, it will seem like all the light has gone out of de house when you is gone."

Annie, to gratify the faithful creature, who was so devoted to her, forced herself to drink a cup of coffee ; then rose from the table, leaving Frederick and her father to finish their breakfast, saying, she would now go to bid adieu to her mother. When she had taken leave of her lady mother, she returned to the dining-room, where she found all the servants collected to bid her farewell, and they manifested more emotion at the thought of her departure than her mother had done.

- At the period of which we are writing, there was no shrill locomotive whistle, to announce to the traveler, who was about to set out on a journey from Washington, that he must hurry his movements, if he would not be left. But the mellow note of the old fashioned stage-horn, floated over street and avenue, as the driver sprang to his seat upon the box, and blew a blast upon this, his inseparable traveling companion, to give notice to those who were to be his passengers, that they should make their adieus, and not detain him a moment when he came to their doors. This sound now fell upon Annie's ear, and she had barely time to get through with the ceremony of leave taking, before the stage coach with four glistening bays dashed up to the gate. The trunks are placed in the receptacle for baggage, and the travelers step into the coach, when, at a word from the driver, the spirited steeds, which have been pawing the ground with impatience at this slight delay, bound away with a speed that soon takes them out of sight of the city. Instead of arriving at Baltimore within the space of two hours after leaving Washington, it was a day's journey, and Annie with her friends arrived there about night-fall, much fatigued. A night's repose rested them,

and they made no delay in Baltimore. The next day they took passage in a vessel bound direct to New York, at which city they arrived without accident. Having spent a few days in the commercial emporium of the Western continent, and viewed its wonders and wealth, they proceeded up the Hudson, stopping to visit its most famous places and beautiful scenery. From the Hudson they passed over lake Champlain to Montreal, where they remained several days. The objects that most interested them in this city, were its churches, monasteries and convents. These they visited with a pious reverence, and, as Eulalie looked upon the placid content depicted on the countenance of the nuns, she could not forbear remarking to Annie :

“Who would not prefer passing their lives within the shade of the convent walls, devoting their time to prayer, and the performance of deeds of charity, to mingling in the world, where all the more tumultuous feelings of our nature are aroused, sometimes almost making us fear our spirits may not be fitted for the pure and quiet joys of Heaven.”

Leaving Montreal, they ascended the St. Lawrence, deriving from the contemplation of its rich scenery, that exquisite pleasure, which is ever awakened in the heart of the lover of nature, by looking on such scenes.

Their next stopping place was at the falls of Niagara. They arrived late in the evening, and, with much difficulty, procured rooms at the best hotel in its vicinity. It was crowded with fashionables ; and as our party was traveling to enjoy the scenery, not to make a display, or attract attention, they were very plainly dressed. Having arrived late, they went to the supper table in their traveling costume. When they entered, the table was nearly filled, and they had to pass almost the entire length of the room ere they could procure seats. Many a side glance was cast at them by the polite portion of the company, as they walked up the brilliantly lighted room, whilst several impertinent Misses actually stared at them, and made simpering remarks on them, as they passed. Our party passed quietly along, not in the least disconcerted by the rude behavior of those, whose dress would bespeak for them the name of lady, whilst their conduct

proclaimed their true character. When they were seated, Eulalie observed that a young girl of about eighteen summers sat at her right hand. She was covered with jewelry; her dress was of the most costly material, and made according to the latest style. She had just taken a cup of tea in her hand, as our party became seated; she put the sugar into the cup. After stirring it some time, she took a sip or two, and then balancing her spoon on the edge of her cup, she took a leisurely survey of the new arrival. When she had satisfied her curiosity, she turned to a grinning, smiling thing which sat beside her, that resembled a monkey more than a man, and said:

"Well, I declare, Mr. Wiggleton, this is the third season I have been here, but never met quite so plain a looking set as our left hand neighbors. It used to be, nobody came to the springs, but tip top people; but I should not be surprised, from present appearances, if before long, as many of the common people would be found here as any where else: so, that having been to the springs will be no test of gentility."

The thing addressed raised an eyeglass to his face, and surveyed Annie and her friends for some time, and then remarked:

"I wondaw who they are."

"Some nobody, you may be sure. And see, they are eating their supper as unconcernedly as if they were attracting no observation. They don't even seem to be aware that the eyes of almost every one at table are gazing on them."

Eulalie, who, before her young life had been shaded by disappointment and sorrow, had been brimful of mischief, always ready for fun, felt some of the old spirit revive in her bosom as she listened to these remarks, and turning to the young girl at her side, she said:

"Indeed, Miss, we do know the people are looking at us, and it is what we expected."

"What you expected?" said the bejeweled young lady, looking at her with contempt.

"Yes, what we expected," reiterated Eulalie.

"And pray, why?" asked the young lady, being impelled by

a feeling she could not resist, to ask this question, notwithstanding her supreme contempt for her plainly dressed neighbor.

"Laws, Annie and me was always reckoned the prettiest girls in our neighborhood up home; and when strangers happened to come to our meeting house, they always looked at us more than anybody else. So, as a matter of course, we expected folks would look at us when we came here. But if they're so taken with us to-night, I don't know what they'll think of us to-morrow, when we get our Sunday gowns on."

"Why, you must be an idiot."

"Oh no, indeed, you're mistaken in that guess. When I went to school, the schoolmaster said I was the smartest scholar he had."

"I pity the rest then."

"Well, you need'nt; they are all well to do in the world. There is Nannie Tompkins; she was the biggest dunce in school, and she's married to Jake Hawkins, and they have a forty acre tract, with a double log cabin on it; he's made a snug clearing, and planted out a young orchard, and has a nice piece of meadow, and a clover patch. When they went to house-keeping, the old folks set them up right well. Her mother give her a bed, a cow, two sheep, a couple of pigs and a dozen laying hens. And would you believe it? she raised nearly a hundred chickens from them hens the first summer. His father give him a horse and plow, a yoke of oxen, an axe and a hoe; so, you see, they were mighty well set up, and, as they are both saving and industrious, the neighbors prophecy they'll be rich before little Nannie—that's their oldest daughter—is twenty."

"Where, in the name of mercy, did you come from?"

"From the West, to be sure."

Annie looked up at Eulalie with surprise; but when she saw the spirit of mischief gleaming in her dark eyes, she made no remark, but a quiet smile passed over her face, and she continued eating her supper.

Mr. Wiggleton, observing that his companion was rendering herself conspicuous, by her seeming interest in her left hand neighbor, although the conversation was not heard by any but

himself and Eulalie's own party, proposed, as the evening was delightful, they should not loiter at the table, but promenade on the balcony. A few moments after, they left the table; Annie and her party also rose and retired to their own parlor. For, although the house was well filled, Frederick had managed, by paying a double price, to secure a parlor for the use of the ladies who accompanied him.

After escorting them to the door, he left them, saying he would look around to see if he could meet any acquaintance among the crowd with which the house was filled. After being absent about an hour, he returned accompanied by two friends, who were also acquainted with Annie. They were presented to the other ladies composing the party, and very soon, as little restraint was felt as if they had known each other for years. They had been at the springs for two or three weeks, and one of them, Charles Deveau, being from New Orleans, and very wealthy, was quite a favorite with the ladies, and he knew the most of them. Annie described to him the lady who sat next Eulalie at the supper table, and asked him if he was acquainted with her.

"Oh, very well," replied he; "I am her especial favorite. But why do you ask of her particularly?"

Annie then related the conversation that passed between her and Eulalie, which caused a roar of laughter. "But," continued Annie, "I cannot conceive what imp of mischief prompted Eulalie to address her in that style."

"Well, I will tell you. It was not so much mischief, as a desire to teach her a lesson how to treat strangers. I did not care anything about her impertinent remarks as regarded myself, but I thought it possible, at some future time, she might treat some plainly dressed person who was more sensitive in this respect than I, in the same manner, thus wounding and mortifying them seriously. I was aware, when it was known that I belonged to the party of a rich Southerner, and the daughter of a distinguished senator, the company I was in would give me some consideration, and she would be taught not to judge by appearances, but to treat all with respect."

"That is a capital idea. And we will help the joke along.

Her desire to be acquainted with persons of distinction, amounts to a passion. I will, to-morrow, mention to her, that among the arrivals of this evening, I met a party of friends, and among them I recognized a lady who had, for two winters past, been the reigning belle of Washington, and also a French lady of New Orleans, who belongs to a family of the highest nobility of France, and I will propose introducing her to my friends."

"Oh do so," said Eulalie, "we will have some sport, and at the same time, teach her a lesson, that may be useful to her in after life."

The next morning after breakfast there seemed to be quite an excitement among the young lady visitors at the springs, and when they met each other, questionings and replies, something in this style would be heard :

"Did you know, that among the arrivals of last evening, there was a young Southerner of unbounded wealth, and he is accompanied by his cousin, the daughter of a distinguished senator, and a French lady, who is actually related to the royal family?"

"Mercy no, where are they?"

"In their private parlor; but Charles Deveau is acquainted with them, and he says he will prevail on them to promenade with him on the balcony about an hour before dinner, so we may all have an opportunity of seeing them."

About the time they supposed the new comers would be seen on the balcony, you may be sure a goodly number of bright eyes were looking out to get a glimpse of them. At length a chattering of French, with great volubility was heard, and Mademoiselle Dupré leaning on the arm of Charles Deveau, was seen to step upon the balcony. Charles' manner, the more to impress the beholders, was exceedingly deferential to her. And she was indeed a splendid looking creature, one that would win the homage of all hearts. Annie, who entered into the spirit of the joke, had insisted upon arraying her most elegantly, and completed her toilet, by decking her with her own expensive jewelry, that her appearance might correspond with her imagined rank. For Charles had told them, it was already noised through the house, that she belonged to the royal family.

Among the most interested beholders of the elegant French woman, was Jemima Stapleton, Eulalie's neighbor at the supper table the previous evening. But she did not recognize in this superb lady, the plain looking country girl whom she then looked upon with contempt.

CHAPTER XXII.

LIFE IN THE WEST.

WE left Eulalie on the balcony, promenading with Charles Deveau; and others, beside the young girls, were observing her with admiration. Several of the gentlemen were loitering about; and you could hear, in undertones, such expressions as the following:

"Splendid eyes—She moves with the dignity of a queen—What a foot—Deveau is a lucky fellow, to be acquainted with her."

Whilst the gentlemen were expressing their admiration, the ladies were criticising her closely.

"No great beauty," says Cora Colville.

"I think her lovely," replied Mollie Clinton.

"I don't see in what her beauty consists," said the first speaker.

"In her eyes, in her hair, in every feature of her face, every movement of her form. Her form is symmetry itself, and all her motions perfect grace."

"Well, I cannot perceive it."

"I bet you a sixpence the gentlemen will. And I suppose they will all be running wild about her, so that the rest of us will scarcely be able to receive that attention from them, which common civility demands, whilst she is here."

"Then, I hope her stay will be short. For I do think a watering place is the most stupid place in creation, unless you have about a dozen beaux, striving for your smiles, to keep you in a state of excitement."

"Now, I differ from your opinion entirely. I think it much more amusing to watch the flirtations of others, than to get up a flirtation of your own; indeed, that is all that induces me to visit watering places."

"I do not doubt it, for I presume you never had a beau of your own."

"No, indeed; and I am so much more comfortable than those who do have them, that, I hope, I never may have one, especially at a watering place. Now, I am not in a panic every new face I meet at table, for fear my beau may neglect me, and pay court to the new comer. But, what do you think of Miss Grayson?"

"Why, I think if she is the belle of Washington, all the beauty of the nation is not concentrated in the federal city. But I suppose she will create quite a sensation here, because she is a senator's daughter. Give us your opinion of her."

"I am much pleased with her appearance. There is a repose and quiet dignity of manner, that indicates a superior mind, and—"

"Ha, ha, Mollie, to hear a rattle-brain like you talk of dignity of manner. It is really laughable."

"If I am a rattle-brain, it does not follow that I cannot appreciate the opposite qualities in another; though it would be ridiculous for me to assume a character that nature never designed me for."

The conversation was here interrupted by the announcement of dinner. And, as Mollie had predicted, the gentlemen were so occupied in observing the movements of Eulalie and Annie, that they almost forgot to escort the ladies to the dinner table.

Mollie, with a countenance of great gravity, had just said to Cora: "Miss Colville, I presume, you will have to accept of my escort to the dining room," when a gentleman approached them, saying:

"Ladies, shall I have the pleasure of waiting on you."

"Certainly," replied Mollie, "and thank you for thinking of us ordinary mortals, after having been dazzled by looking on the brilliant French girl." Cora bowed stiffly, not condescending to utter a word.

Although Charles and Eulalie had never met in New Orleans, many of their acquaintances were the same, and as he had just come from the Crescent City a few weeks previous, she was much interested in hearing from the friends of her glad girlhood. When dinner was over, and the ladies had retired to their own rooms, to indulge in a siesta, discuss the occurrences of the day, or plan the arrangement of their toilet for the evening's dance; the gentlemen were collected in groups, indulging in ecstatic exclamations with regard to the two accomplished and beautiful girls who had just arrived.

When Annie and Eulalie were alone, Annie remarked to her friend :

"I see plainly, you are destined to be queen of hearts, whilst you remain. Did you observe the admiring glances of the gentlemen during dinner !"

"No, I did not, for I was listening to the conversation of Mr. Deveau, who was telling me of the friends of my childhood, and my thoughts were busy with memories of bygone days."

"And you forgot the royal bearing you were to assume, yet, you sustained your supposed character well. In what costume will your ladyship choose to array yourself this evening ?"

"I will array myself, as becomes one, who is dependent on the kindness of a friend for all life's comforts. I feel that I have done wrong, in giving a false impression as to my true position. I, who have ever condemned such things, to be guilty of such a folly, not to say, untruth. Sister always taught me when at school, that it was just as debasing, to that high standard of moral purity which should govern me, to act a falsehood, as to utter one. I feel humbled in my own estimation."

"I had not thought of it thus, but 'tis true, and I am equally culpable for having assisted in the deception. However, it only shows how easily we may be led to commit an error when giving way to the excitement of society."

In the evening, Eulalie appeared in the ball room robed in a simple white dress, with no ornament save a white rose in her raven hair. The admiration she had excited at dinner was in-

creased. The gentlemen said at dinner her appearance was queenly, but now it was divine.

Many gentlemen sought the acquaintance of both Annie and Eulalie. Among the number were some of intellect and refinement, thus making the time spent at the springs very pleasant. Having remained about two weeks, and visited every object of any interest in the vicinity of Niagara, they embarked on one of the floating palaces of the northern lakes, and proceeded to Illinois. When they arrived at Quincy, it was about eight o'clock in the evening. Having inquired for the best hotel, they proceeded directly to it. When they came there, they found it a large frame house, with a porch running along the whole front. Upon the porch were several men collected, and from the few words that fell upon the ears of our travelers, they inferred they were the village politicians, discussing the probability of some favorite candidate's success in a coming election.

They were shown into the house by one of the number, whom they soon discovered to be the landlord, for he introduced himself by saying :

"Will the strangers have anything?"

"We would like to have some supper," replied Frederick Leroux.

"Well, I'll go see the old woman about it."

He stepped into the next room, but returned in a moment, accompanied by the "old woman." She was an old lady, seemingly, about fifty years of age, with a pleasant countenance. Approaching Mrs. Stanmore, she said :

"Well, marm, my old man here, says you want some supper. Now, ef you'll put up with a cup of tea, some cold ham, with bread and butter, and sich like, I can soon have it ready for you; but, I raly dont believe I could go and git a whole fresh supper for you, for I'm tired down. Me, and my hired gal is both run off our feet, for there's bin a convention here, in Quincy, to-day, to appint a candidate for Congress, and the house has bin chuck full of customers all day."

"My dear madam," replied Mrs. Stanmore, "we would not desire anything better than you propose giving us."

"Well, then, I can have it ready in a minute," said she, leaving the room.

When she had left, Fred turned to the landlord, and said :

"I suppose, you are acquainted with Mr. Stanmore, the publisher of a newspaper in this town."

"Well, now, stranger, I'd like for you to find anybody in these diggins, that don't know Squire Stanmore, and like him, too."

Frederick stepped to a table, upon which a lighted candle was placed, and took from his pocket a small slip of paper and pencil, and, writing a few words, he folded the note, and addressed it to Edwin ; then, turning to the landlord, he said :

"Will you allow a servant to carry this note to Mr. Stanmore ?"

"Stranger, we haint got any sarvants out here ; but I have a hired man, that can carry it for you ; or, if it is anything that will give pleasure to the Squire, any of the boys out here on the porch, will be glad to take it to him, for he is a mighty favorite."

"I presume, it will give him pleasure, for it is to let him know his mother is here."

"I guess it will, and he shall hear of it in no time ;" and, taking the note from Frederick, he stepped on to the porch, and said :

"Boys, one of them women in there, is Squire Stanmore's mother. Who will take this bit of a letter over to him, to let him know she is here ?"

"I," said at least a dozen voices.

When he had dispatched the note, he went to the kitchen, to let his "gude wife" know for whom she was preparing supper.

"What's that you say ? One of 'em's Squire Stanmore's mother ?"

"Yes, indeed."

"Well, I guess she shall have something better than a cold bite for supper ;" and turning to the girl, who was preparing to draw the tea, she thus addressed her :

"Jerush, you run to the coop, and kill a couple of chickens, while I get the water ready to scald them. And whilst I am getting them ready to *brile*, you can beat up some eggs, and mix

some batter to bake waffles. Now, see that you put plenty of eggs in them, and take good rich night's milk to make them with, for I want them nice."

When our hostess of the best hotel in Quincy wished to treat any one particularly well, she always ordered waffles and "briled" chicken. The host seeing things were taking about the right turn in the kitchen, went back into the room occupied by the travelers, well satisfied that the whitest honey-comb, the nicest ham, and most choice preserves would be forthcoming on the present occasion. This was just what he wished, but would not have dared to order it upon any account, for Madam Helvenstein was a stern stickler for "Woman's Rights." But poor simple-minded woman, her ideas of "Woman's Rights" were very unlike those entertained by the ladies who now meet in conventions to establish and advocate the rights of our sex.

In her opinion, it was the right of woman to have the entire management of her household affairs, without any interference on the part of man, and to cook just what she chose for her guests, without any orders from mine host. And believing this to be her right, she maintained it. But had any one have told her that it was woman's right to vote, to have her proportion of the public offices, and that it was her duty to go about delivering public lectures, attend conventions, and make speeches, for the purpose of securing to herself these rights, she would have thought they had taken leave of their senses, and she would have told them, pretty quick, she guessed if they minded their own business, attended to the putting up of pickles and preserves, took care of the children and kept their clothes in order, she would not have much time for gadding about to conventions or making speeches. Poor old Mrs. Helvenstein, she was altogether behind the times in this age of progress. But we digress.

When our host returned to the travelers, he addressed Frederick, saying :

"Well, stranger, you were speaking about sarvants before I went out. Now, they are a critter that ~~don't~~ graze on the rich prairies of Illinois."

"What did you say?"

"Why, I say on our rich prairie of Illinois, there is nobody so poor, that they are under the necessity of being sarvants. We have our hired help; but I guess they would not stay and help you long, if you were to call them sarvants."

"I have often heard of the independent spirit of the western people. My friend Edwin Stanmore thinks there is not another such a set of noble hearted people to be found, as his friends in Quincy and its neighborhood."

"And I guess they think ditto of him. We have nominated him to-day as our candidate for Congress, and we'll elect him too."

"Well, he has fine talents, he will not be a discredit to you."

"Yes, and he has not only talents, but he has principles and a soul too. You see, there are a tarnal sight of smart fellows sent to Congress, who have not one mite of principle. And when they get there, all they do, is to manage and bargain for their own advancement, never thinking of their constituents till they want their votes to re-elect them. Now, the Squire is not one of these, he has gumption and principles both—But here he is to speak for himself."

In a moment he had clasped his mother's hand within his own and imprinted a kiss upon her cheek. After greeting Frederick and Annie, he was presented by Frederick to Eulalie and her mother, and he, in turn, presented his friends individually to honest John Helvenstein, the host. When he had grasped the hand of each and given it a cordial shake, he said, addressing Edwin:

"Well, Squire, your friends and me have had considerable chat, and feel smartly acquainted, but I 'spose it is well enough to be introduced, to make these city folks feel at their ease."

"I knew my friends would like to feel the grasp of an honest man's hand; I suppose they had not taken the liberty of shaking hands with you before I came."

"Taken liberties, no indeed, they behaved mighty well, but we would not expect any thing else from friends of yours."

"I did not shake hands with him," remarked Frederick, "but

I felt very much like doing so, on account of the kind words he spoke in your praise."

"Ah, yes, I have a true friend in honest John Helvenstein."

"Well, you have that," was the response of our host.

He had scarcely finished the sentence, when a voice was heard to sing out in front of the door:

"Three cheers for Squire Stanmore and his friends."

And immediately such a hurra rose upon the night air, as can only be heard in a western town, from hearts honest and true. It had scarce subsided, when the voice of the hostess was heard distinctly, holding the following language:

"Shame on you boys, to come afore my door and show your country raising, when there are city ladies in the house. Now jist make yourselves scarce."

They were about to leave, feeling much abashed, when Edwin stepped out and said:

"Dear Mrs. Helvenstein, the cheers were given on account of kindly feeling, and should be received in the spirit in which it was given." Then turning to his friends he said to them:

"Thank you, my friends, for the tribute of respect you offer me, nor do I find fault with the manner in which it was given."

"You're the man for us, Squire," exclaimed several voices: "you always seem to understand a fellow, and know just where his heart is."

"Well, if the Squire is satisfied, I'm sure I am," said Mrs. Helvenstein. "You kin stay ef you want to, and when the Squire and his friends are done their supper, any of you that want a cup of tea or coffee kin come into the dining room, and I will give it to you. You know, the Squire wont allow us to treat you with anything stronger than that."

"No, Mrs. Helvenstein, I would not tempt a fellow creature to intemperance by offering him a cup of liquor, if I knew by that means I could secure to myself the highest office within the gift of the American people."

"You are right, Squire; and it is because you have done so much good in persuading drunken husbands to become sober, respectable men, that you have all the women in your favor;

and a man that has all the women on his side, never loses his election."

"Thank you for your kind opinion; but come in, and let me introduce you to my friends."

"Not till I have their supper ready, Squire."

Saying this, she disappeared, and her voice was heard giving orders to Jerush. It was but a few minutes till her pleasant face was seen at the door.

"Come, Squire," said she, "bring your friends out, to eat a bite of supper."

Edwin conducted his friends to the dining room, introduced them to Mrs. Helvenstein, and in a few minutes they were seated at the table, upon which was placed a supper that would satisfy the palate of an epicure.

Broiled chicken, with a rich gravy of fresh sweet butter, such as is found only in the west, with ham of the most delicious flavor, for Mrs. Helvenstein always attended the putting up of her own bacon. The bread was of the whitest and sweetest, the waffles incomparable, and the coffee clear as amber, with its rich cream; the honey-comb was rich, the preserves and other etceteras were all of the best. And never was banquet of a king partaken of with higher enjoyment than was this supper, beneath the roof of John Helvenstein. Whilst they were at supper, Edwin proposed to his mother, if they were not too much fatigued, that they should go to his own house, which was near by, when they were through with supper. And in the morning, he would send for the woman he had engaged to assist her, and they would be at home without any farther trouble.

"Pity, but it was daylight," remarked Mrs. Helvenstein, "so you could see what a pretty place it is. I have been telling him he ought to get married. He has such a pretty cage, he ought to get a bird to put in it."

"I am in no hurry about it, two or three years hence will be time enough."

"Well, I'll give you fair warning that if you go to Washington and marry a stuck up city gal, and bring her here, we won't hev anything to say to her."

"If ever I bring a wife among you, she will be one who will win all hearts to love her."

In such light badinage, the time passed whilst they were eating supper. When it was ended, Mrs. Stanmore and her friends bade a kindly good night to the host and hostess, and accompanied Edwin to his own home, where we will leave them to enjoy a night of refreshing slumber.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE PIC-NIC.

ANNIE and Eulalie occupied the same room. Sweet and refreshing had been their slumber. The bright rays of the newly risen sun had just fallen on the flowers to kiss away the dew drops that rested on their petals, like tears upon a maiden's cheek, when Annie was roused from her slumbers by the mellow note of the stage horn. Eulalie still slept; Annie rose quietly, that she might not disturb her. After arranging her glossy hair, and putting on a becoming morning wrapper, she threw up the window-sash, to look out upon the village, for Quincy was, at that time, a village. As she did so, the fresh morning breeze, laden with the perfume of flowers, kissed her cheek, giving her a sensation of exquisite enjoyment. She glanced over the village, but her eye was immediately attracted to the grounds surrounding the house of Edwin Stanmore. Possessing a keen perception of the beautiful, she at once perceived it was deserving of the praises bestowed on it by Mrs. Helvenstein. The grounds were laid out with taste; in them were planted choice trees and flowers, with many of those beautiful plants that grow wild on the prairies, but which are much improved by cultivation. A wild rose was trained over the window at which she was standing, and as she looked upon its beautiful clusters of flowers, now in bloom, and containing in the same cluster roses of every tint, from the most delicate pink to the deepest red, she exclaimed :

"Beautiful ! exceedingly beautiful !"

And then the remark of Mrs. Helvenstein, that now the squire

had the cage, he ought to get the bird to put in it, recurring to her, she involuntarily murmured :

"Glad and gay must be the songs of the lady-bird who inhabits this cage with such a noble mate as Edwin Stanmore ! How he attaches to himself all with whom he has intercourse !"

She had not been standing long at the window, when she saw Edwin and his mother walking through the beautiful yard in front of the house. They approached a moss rose-bush, which was filled with buds and flowers. Mrs. Stanmore stopped to admire it, and Edwin naturally cast his eyes towards the window of the room in which he supposed Annie was sleeping ; but seeing her at the window, he saluted her by raising his hat, and she acknowledged his salutation by a smile. Mrs. Stanmore observing she was up and dressed, approached the window, and asked her if she would not descend and enjoy with them a promenade in the garden, and inhale the sweet breath of morning as it swept over the flowers. Annie threw a scarf over her head, and joined them immediately. If she had admired the garden from the window, she was perfectly enchanted with it when she descended. The most beautiful feature, in her estimation, was a rustic summer house, which was covered with the wild rose and honey suckle. The wild rose, being in bloom, did give it a beautiful appearance. Annie looked on it with admiration, and exclaimed :

"Surely the bowers in the vale of Cashmere, are not more lovely than this !"

"Nor more pleasant," said Edwin. "Come, let us enter and enjoy its pleasant shade, for the warmth of the sun-beams are beginning to be felt."

They entered and found it furnished with seats.

"Come, mother, let us be seated, and talk of the past, and plan for the future," said Edwin.

"No, my child, we will neither talk of the past, nor plan for the future, but enjoy the present."

"As you will, mother dear, for the present is full of joy to me."

"I trust it may ever be thus."

"If it is not, it shall be no fault of mine, for I will ever do

what is honorable and just. Nothing shall ever tempt me to swerve from the path of rectitude and duty, and acting thus, I have no fear but I shall be happy."

They had been conversing thus some time, when Mrs. Stanmore rose, saying :

"It is indeed very pleasant in this rose-covered bower ; but I must leave it and attend to breakfast, our guests will need something more substantial to subsist upon, than the fragrance of flowers."

"True," said Annie, "but I was so much interested, I had forgotten such a thing as breakfast was needed, but I will assist you in preparing it."

"There is no need of that, I presume it is already prepared. Edwin, last night sent a message to Keziah Kester, the "help," he had engaged to assist me, and she was here to assist me before the sun had risen ; and, whilst we were considering what we should do to procure something for breakfast, for there is no market here, the neighbors relieved us of all trouble. One sent me a nice bowl of cream, with coffee parched and ready for making ; another a couple of chickens ready for the gridiron, and others with eggs, butter, honey, and everything you could mention in the line of eatables, each with the message :

"Mother thought you might not know, as you are a stranger, where to send to get things for breakfast—will you accept something from her?"

"It is very pleasant to receive such kindness at the hands of strangers. Indeed, I do not feel as if I were among strangers."

"I should love dearly to live among such kind hearted people," said Annie.

"Do you really think you could be content to live in the West?" said Edwin, his manner betraying how much he was interested in her answer.

"From what I have seen of the country and the people, I am sure I would be delighted if my home were here. There is such a generous, frank-heartedness about the people ; and the country is beautiful as well as fertile. I can comprehend the pride and

attachment that the Western people feel, when speaking of the great valley of the Mississippi."

When they went into the house, they found the table neatly spread for breakfast, and everything in readiness for the morning's meal. Soon, the guests were all assembled, and seated at the breakfast table. When Edwin had placed upon the plate of each some chicken with a bit of ham and egg, Frederick surveyed the table, saying :

"Well, Squire, I must say, you are an excellent host. But, by-the-by, how is it that you have the title of Squire?"

"The people have bestowed it upon me, as a token of their respect and good will."

"You have succeeded admirably in winning their favor. Only to think of it; you have been among them so short a time, and now they are going to elect you to represent them in Congress. That is getting up in the world rapidly."

"I am not elected yet."

"No; but judging from the enthusiasm of your friends, there is no doubt, but you will be."

"The friends of a candidate for public favor, are always enthusiastic in their belief of his success. But to form a correct opinion of his prospects, you must hear the opinion of his opponents, as well as those of his friends. However, I believe I shall be elected."

"I am truly glad I was induced to come to visit you, for seeing the esteem in which you are held by your neighbors has determined me to waste my time no longer in trifling; but I will go home, and endeavor to make myself useful in my neighborhood, and I too, in time, may be deemed worthy to have a seat in Congress. Yes, I will henceforth be a useful member of society."

"I am truly glad such is your determination, for with your talents, you may attain any position you seek; and your great wealth will enable you to do much good for your fellow creatures."

"I will remain a month or two, and learn of you how to win the hearts of those with whom I have intercourse."

"That is easily done. Always do right; do not let any selfish motive prompt you. Be just and generous from principle, not from a desire of winning popularity, and you will win the esteem of your fellow men. They will understand and appreciate your character. That is the course I have pursued, and no man can have more devoted friends than I have."

"And none deserves them more."

"Thank you, for your kind opinion."

When the breakfast hour had passed, Edwin told his mother and her friends that they must excuse him from devoting the day to them, as the duties of the office demanded his presence, and he would be obliged to leave them to attend to it. Frederick accompanied him, and the ladies were left alone. But they did not remain alone long, for several ladies called during the day, to welcome Mrs. Stanmore and her friends, and to tender them the hospitalities of the village. When Edwin returned to dinner, he was pleased to hear that the day had been spent so pleasantly in receiving the visits of his friends.

"How were you impressed with their appearance?" said he to Annie.

"I was much pleased. I did not expect to find them so refined and intellectual; some of them were equal to any lady you meet in Washington society."

"It is true, you will find no better society anywhere than in our Western towns, for they are composed of the most enterprising citizens from the older States. Many gentlemen whose families have received the highest mental culture, who have moved in the best circles, and visited in the most refined society, become citizens of our thriving Western towns; thus, although our society is limited, it is of the best."

"Among others who visited us was Mrs. Helvenstein, our kind landlady. Now, I had rather formed my opinion of the ladies of Quincy from her, and therefore I was the more surprised when I saw Mrs. Selden and her daughters, who are truly refined and intellectual."

"Almost every Western town has its Mrs. Helvenstein, who has kept the village inn since the first store was opened to draw

customers from the surrounding country. As the town increased in size and acquired sufficient importance to bring travelers to the inn, the innkeeper would prosper, and in time become wealthy. But the wife, in the meantime, was so much engaged in keeping up the character of her house for giving the best entertainment, that, although she has increased her store of worldly wealth, and the humble tenement which was the tavern when she first commenced that occupation, has given place to a fine building, with furniture of the latest style, she still retains that simplicity of manner which characterized her when she was mistress of the humbler tenement. She knows and is known by every one in the town, and is respected by all for her kindness of heart. If a strange young lady or gentleman comes to the town, she is the first to become acquainted with them, and give a party for the purpose of introducing them to the other young folks of her acquaintance. She is such a general favorite, that her blunt, plain manners are never observed or commented on, and you will meet her at the houses of the most elegant and refined citizens of the village. And the parties given by her are always attended by all who enjoy a social pleasant evening."

We have said this much of the character of Mrs. Helvenstein, the kind-hearted hostess, and her position in Quincy, because the first party to which the friends of Edwin were invited after their arrival at Quincy, was given by her. It came off about a week after they had arrived, and both Annie and Eulalie declared, when they returned home, they had never enjoyed a party more. If there was not that elegance and conformity to etiquette which characterize the parties of secretaries and senators in Washington, there was a freedom from restraint, and a social spirit which is infinitely more agreeable.

After Mrs. Helvenstein, several other of the prominent citizens gave parties, and so pleasantly did the time pass, that a month went by and they scarce noted the lapse of time. Several excursions to visit different places of interest in the vicinity, had been projected, but Edwin's time had been so much occupied that he could not accompany them, consequently, they were

waiting till he could find a leisure day for that purpose ; because it was his motto, never to neglect business for pleasure.

At length a spare day was found, and a party went out to a beautiful grove six or eight miles from Quincy, to enjoy the pleasures of a pic nic. The morning was lovely, and each heart beat high with anticipations of a day of real enjoyment. Every carriage in the village was called in requisition, yet still there were not enough to convey all the company to the grove, and it was determined that some of them should ride on horseback. Among those who preferred this mode of conveyance, were Edwin and Annie. The ride over the prairie was delightful, and the grove was reached about ten o'clock. All were in the gayest spirits. Songs, wit and sentiment, gave wings to time, and it was one o'clock ere they had deemed half of that time had elapsed. Finding it so late, the gentlemen went to the carriages and brought forth certain baskets. The ladies took therefrom, table linen of snowy whiteness and spread upon the bright green turf, then arranged thereon, with much taste, the delicacies that were to furnish the repast.

Whilst they were thus engaged, tripping gracefully about with merry jests and joyous laughter, Frederick Leroux, who was seated beside Mary Selden, upon the trunk of a fallen tree, looking with much interest upon the group before him, remarked :

" A beautiful tableau, Miss Selden. We have such pleasure parties frequently in the South, but there, we always take our servants to arrange the refreshments. Yet I believe it is enjoyed with a truer zest when the ladies spread it themselves. Just see, they flit about as gracefully as if they were the wood nymphs themselves, holding a high holiday, and preparing a banquet for us mortals."

" Why did you allude to anything calculated to call up in my mind the horrid subject of slavery ?" said Miss Selden.

" Then you have been to the South and witnessed the horrors of slavery ?"

" No, thank God, I never was in a slave state in my life. I have only read of the horrors of slavery, and that was enough to make my heart ache with compassion. I should love dearly to

visit the sunny South, to look upon its bright skies, and breathe its perfumed air, made fragrant with the breath of the orange flower. But, all the pleasure I would derive from looking on the fair face of nature, would be destroyed by being obliged at the same time to witness the degradation of the poor down-trodden African race, crushed to the earth by my fellow beings."

"Perhaps, if you would visit the South, and look upon the condition of the slaves, you would find that slavery was less horrible to look upon than to read about."

"Oh, no, that cannot be; only think of it: one class of human beings obliged to labor for, and wait upon another, because their skins are black! What injustice!"

"I believe you came from the city of New York?"

"Yes; that was formerly my home."

"I suppose, there all are equal, each waits upon himself, and one class does not labor for another?"

"Oh, no: the poor work for the rich, of course."

"It seems to me there is injustice in that."

"Injustice or not, they are glad enough to get the work to do."

"So I have been told; and in many cases the compensation received for the labor performed is so trifling, that they are unable to procure a sufficient quantity of wholesome food for their families, and comfortable clothing. And in some instances, being unable to pay reasonable rents, they are obliged to live in cellars, where the fresh air of heaven can scarcely penetrate; and in these wretched abodes, sickly overtasked females are obliged to labor from early dawn till past the midnight hour, to earn a meagre pittance, that barely suffices to keep them from perishing."

"It is unfortunately too true."

"Now, it seems strange to me, that people who have so much sympathy for southern slaves, as the citizens of New York express, should suffer such wretchedness to exist in their midst, and not relieve it."

"Yes; but they are free."

"Free! Yes, free to toil and suffer. But it is useless to discuss those things. However, I would be happy, indeed, if you could be prevailed on, to accompany my cousin and Miss Dupré,

and spend a few months in the south with us, that you may yourself see the condition of the African race in the south, and judge how much worse their condition is than that of the poorer classes in the city of New York."

"I should enjoy a visit to the south in company of such esteemed friends, for, I must confess, I feel a friendship for you, as well as your cousin and Miss Dupré, notwithstanding you are of that odious character, a slaveholder."

"Thank you for your kindness, in not regarding me with abhorrence. Will you accompany us?"

"I will consult my parents; and if they will consent, I will avail myself of this opportunity of visiting the south."

Just at this moment, Louise Hinton, a merry gypsy, came skipping towards them, saying:

"Come, we have the dinner all arranged, and nice cool water from the spring, so hasten along, before it loses its freshness." But, observing that Mary, who was usually the life of every party, looked so serious, she added:

"What, now, you and Mr. Leroux both look grave as owls; what mighty subject are you pondering?"

"We were speaking of slavery; and you know how I feel upon that subject."

"Oh, pshaw! don't bother your brains about the slaves; but let their masters and mistresses take care of them. I dare say, they are a great deal happier than many persons who are always talking about their unfortunate condition."

Notwithstanding Louise's merriment, Mary remained thoughtful, whilst she was partaking of the repast spread before her. But it was not the thought of the condition of the slaves that occasioned it, but the recollection of a scene she had witnessed a short time before she left New York, which was indelibly impressed on her memory, and the words of Frederick had called it up.

In our next chapter, we will present to our readers the scene, the remembrance of which chased the smiles from Mary's lips; also, the incidents of the return of this gay party to Quincy.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE DECLARATION.

WE promised, in our last chapter, to place before our readers the scene that caused a shade of thought to rest on the brow of the mirth-loving Mary Selden.

It was a bright day in March, and Mary had gone out to make a few calls. She had not proceeded far, when she saw approaching her a little girl aged about ten years, whose apparel denoted extreme poverty. When she came near her, she looked up into her face appealingly, and said, in a voice piercingly sad :

"Oh, fair lady, Eddy is dying; mother and I have not eaten anything for two days, for mother cannot leave Eddy, while he is so sick, to earn money. Give me something to buy a little bread. I never begged before," said she, "but I am so hungry! Mother is so grieved about Eddy, she does not think of eating."

Prompted by an impulse for which she could not account, she replied :

"I will go with you to see your mother."

"Oh, do! may be it will make her less sorrowful to see somebody."

Going a short distance, the child turned into a street inhabited by none but the miserably poor. Here she entered a cellar. Mary felt some misgiving about following her; but as she had come this far, she resolved to see the suffering inmates. When she entered, her eye rested upon a scene which left an impress that time will never efface.

Lying upon a straw pallet in one corner, was a boy of about eight years of age. He was wasted to a mere skeleton, but a

sweet smile was on his countenance, and his large hazel eye beamed with an unearthly lustre, as he lovingly gazed into the pale face of his mother, who was kneeling by his side, with his tiny hands clasped within her own.

"Mother," said he, in a voice strangely sweet, "I know I am dying, for I see the good angels you have often told me about, ready to carry me to heaven. Mother, ask God to let you and Minnie die too, and then we will all be so happy in heaven, where there is no cold, nor hunger, nor suffering."

"No, darling," murmured the mother, "it would be wicked for me to ask God to let me die, till it is his own good pleasure to take me home."

"Then, mother, when I go to heaven and am in God's own presence, I will ask him to give you a nice room where the blessed sun can shine in, for you and Minnie to live in, and plenty to eat, like we used to have before papa went to heaven. That won't be wicked, will it?"

Before the mother could reply, the spirit of the child had passed from earth. She laid his little hands upon his breast, and clasping her own, she raised her tearless eyes to Heaven, and ejaculated :

"Oh, heavenly father! I thank thee, that thou hast taken my heart's cherished one to thyself, where he will no more feel cold, hunger or want!"

Mary now stepped to her side, and said :

"Dear madam, can I do anything for you?"

"Yes : bury my darling." Then, looking at her earnestly, she added : "But how came you here? It is not often we see such as you in the abodes of misery."

Mary told her she had met her daughter in the street, and her simple story had interested her so much, that she accompanied her home.

This seemed to bring to the mother's mind, the recollection that she had still a living child, and, turning to Minnie, who stood sobbing by her side, she clasped her to her bosom, saying :

"Heaven have compassion on you, my poor suffering one."

And the mother, who had no tear for the dead, wept over the

living child, as if her heart were breaking. Mary, feeling that she could do nothing herself, said :

"I will send my father, and he will have your Eddy buried."

"Heaven's blessing rest on your head, for the ray of comfort that your words have given to a heart that has drank deeply of sorrow's bitter draught."

As Mary promised, her father buried Eddy ; he also removed the mother and Minnie to a bright cheerful apartment. But sorrow and want had done their work : in a few days, the stricken mother slept beside her darling Eddy, and Minnie was cared for by Mr. Selden's family.

The words of Frederick had recalled this picture vividly, and Mary did not regain her usual vivacity, until they were about returning home.

A train of reflections was called up in her mind, that had never found place there before ; and she came to the conclusion, that it might be possible, whilst the citizens of the northern states were expending so much sympathy upon a class, whose condition could not be materially affected by them, they were neglecting those who were suffering in their midst, and who certainly have some claims upon their compassion.

But when the repast was ended, and they began to make preparation for returning home, her usual spirits returned. The remembrance of the slave in his southern home, and the poor seamstress in her dismal cellar of an eastern city, both passed from her mind. She felt the pure fresh air, as it swept over the broad prairies of the west, fanning her cheek ; the merry voices of her companions made music in her ear, driving away the unpleasant recollections that had for a time been called up.

The day had been passed pleasantly by all. For in a western village, there is no party where there is so much enjoyment as a picnic. When they started home, Annie and Edwin took the lead. Annie's fine horsemanship elicited much admiration, and remarks something like the following, were heard :

"Why, she sits on her horse as fearlessly as any country maiden. See with what ease she manages her horse." "It is well she is a bold rider," remarked another. "I know the horse

she is riding, and although his paces are just such as the ladies like, if anything should put it into his head to move at a more rapid rate than he is now traveling, she would find it not an easy matter to restrain him."

On went this merry party toward Quincy. From some of the carriages might be heard snatches of song, whilst from others bursts of laughter were borne on the breeze, frequently attracting the attention of those who were on horseback, and who were not so boisterously gay. But, Edwin and Annie were not attracted by it, they were speaking of the past: of the incidents of their childhood, reminiscences connected with Washington, and so occupied were they, that they did not observe a drove of wild young horses, which had never been tamed by bridle or halter, feeding quietly near the road-side. As they approached these untamed animals, they threw up their heads in the air, looking at the approaching company a moment, and then darted off over the prairie at a rapid gait. Their moving off so rapidly, seemed to inspire the horse upon which Annie rode with a similar inclination, for quick as thought he bounded off at the top of his speed. Annie, finding she could not cause him to slacken his speed by holding a tight rein, felt somewhat frightened, but Edwin reassured her, by telling her there was not the slightest danger, if she would sit steadily in the saddle, and continue to hold a tight rein. He kept by her side, speaking words of encouragement, and they had gone over about two miles at this rapid rate, when they came near a little stream that wound its way through the prairie. The horses continued to move with the same wild speed at which they had started, and Annie said:

"I very much fear I shall not be able to keep my seat when we go down the bank of that little stream, and if I should be thrown from my horse, whilst he is going at this rapid rate, I should certainly be killed."

"Do not be alarmed," replied Edward, "he will slacken his pace ere he crosses the stream."

On, on they go—they are within a few paces of the stream, Annie's courage is fast giving way, but, just on the brink, her horse stops as suddenly as it started. She loses her equilibrium

and falls. The shock of the fall, and the excitement she had endured, caused her to faint, and by the time Edwin had stopped his own horse, dismounted and approached the spot where she lay, the pallor of death was on her countenance, and she looked as if life were extinct.

He snatched her wildly from the earth, and bore her to a spot where the grass grew so luxuriantly, that by pressing it down, it almost made a bed. Here he laid her down gently, then ran to the brook and brought therefrom his hat full of water, and commenced bathing her face and hands. It was so long before she showed any signs of returning animation, that he began to fear she was really dead, and imprinting on her cold pale lips a burning kiss, he said :

"Oh, merciful God! am I destined to see all to whom my heart's deepest, holiest love is given, perish prematurely, taken from earth in the freshness and beauty of youth? When Ella, my almost idolized sister, slept in the quiet of the grave, I did not feel entirely lonely, for Annie, the playmate of my childhood, whispered words of comfort in my ear, and I fondly dreamed that she might be the bright star that would shed radiance o'er my pathway in life. How earnestly have I striven to attain a position, that the world might deem me her equal, that I might ask that boon. Now, I feel that it is almost attained, and here she lies upon my bosom like a crushed flower."

Having given utterance to these exclamations, he put back the silken curls, that the breeze had blown over her face, and kissed her beautiful brow, upon which the seal of death seemed set. It seemed the very intensity of his anguish recalled her to consciousness, for she slowly unclosed her eyes; but, when she observed the look of devoted love, with which Edwin was regarding her, she closed them again; yet, the quick blood mounted to her cheek, giving it a bright glow, and Edwin said in a voice of tender entreaty :

"Annie, dear Annie! look up, and say you are not seriously hurt. Oh, you do not know how I have suffered during your insensibility!"

She raised herself up, and said :

"Oh, I believe I am not hurt at all; it was only fright, that overcame me."

"Thank God, that it is so! for had any serious injury befallen you, I should have been wretched. Listen to me, Annie, I can no longer hide the deep love that I bear you. It seems a part of my very existence. When I looked upon your pale face, and thought you might be dead, life seemed not worth possessing. Your image has been shrined in my heart since boyhood. To win your love has been the bright dream of my life, and may I hope, when I shall have earned a name among men, that I may then ask it, and not be rejected."

"Edwin, you may deem me forward—but no, you know me too well to misunderstand me—when I say you need not wait till you gain a name among men, to ask my love. Think you I could have known you, as I have done, since early boyhood, without feeling more than an ordinary interest. I know too well the value of worldly greatness, to base my hopes of happiness on anything so uncertain and fleeting. I have associated, all my life, with those whom the world calls great, and some who are thus regarded, are base counterfeits, whilst others are true coin. Sometimes, situations of honor are procured by means that would mantle with a blush the cheek of an honest man. Knowing this, I do not attach too much importance to these honors. Therefore, when I do bestow my hand, it will be upon one in whose bosom beats a true and honest heart."

"Thank you, Annie, for those kind expressions. Women are so liable to be won by position and outward appearance, even against their better judgment, that I feared you, whom I knew to be superior to most of your sex, might be somewhat influenced thereby."

"It is with mortification, I admit, that it is a weakness belonging to most of our sex, to be attracted by high sounding titles, and outward display, regardless of intrinsic merit. But you should have known me better, than to have supposed I belonged to that class."

"I had seen but little of you since we were mere children, before you were the admired belle of Washington society. I

know the character of young girls sometimes become strangely changed by mingling in the gay world, and there is no place in the world where a pure, simple taste is more likely to become perverted than in Washington circles. But the cause is very evident, for there is such a looking up, and so much attention paid to those holding the higher offices in Government, that it naturally has a tendency to destroy a simple republican appreciation of merit."

"Well, Edwin, let me tell you, that my intercourse with fashionable society, instead of making me in love with it, has enabled me to see more thoroughly its hollow-heartedness. Such a life is perfectly wearisome. I have no love for it. There is more true, heartfelt enjoyment in one such day as this, than in all the formal parties you may attend during a winter in Washington."

"Leaving out the race and fall from the horse, I suppose you mean."

"Oh, no, that is the best part, for it has been the means of showing me your true feelings with regard to myself."

"Thank you, Annie, for that kind admission. I have many friends who would go any lengths to serve me, and for whom I would undergo any trouble to render them a service, yet, I have but few heart-treasures. No sister, or brother, only my mother, and I believe that is the reason I have loved you with such intensity. But, see, our friends are coming, I will go and get our horses."

By the time Edwin had brought their horses, that were quietly cropping the tender prairie grass at a short distance from the road side, their friends had come up to them, and when they ascertained Annie had received no serious injury, a shout of joy actually rang out upon the prairie. They had watched her receding from their sight, as her horse skimmed over the ground with the rapidity of a bird upon wing, with anxiety and dread, and when they no longer saw her, they feared when they looked upon her again, that it would be upon her mangled corpse.

The song and jest were hushed, the smile faded from their lips, upon each countenance was depicted fear and anxiety, whilst

words of apprehension were breathed in sad low tones. And when they came within speaking distance, and ascertained she was unhurt, such a sense of relief was experienced, that they could not repress the shout of joy that rose to their lips.

Mary Selden insisted that Annie should take her seat in the carriage, and she would ride her horse. This arrangement being made, the gay party soon arrived at Quincy. And the picnic at which the Washington belle took such a wild ride was spoken of for years afterwards in Quincy, by some who were present on that day.

CHAPTER XXV.

AN ELECTION DAY IN ILLINOIS.

THE day after the picnic, the house of Mrs. Stanmore was crowded with visitors, for Annie had won the hearts of the citizens of Quincy, by her affability and kindness. And they called to inquire if she had received any injury by her fall of the preceding day. Even Edwin, who was usually so much occupied, found more time than usual to loiter about the house, and enjoy many quiet conversations with Annie, which, though very interesting to themselves, would not sufficiently interest the reader to bear a repetition.

As the time for the election approached, Edwin's time was much occupied with politics, and it was necessary it should be, for his opponent resorted to every means to secure votes. The rum-sellers were all opposed to Edwin, on account of his advocacy of temperance, which at that time, was more unpopular than it is now. His opponent had given them instructions to treat every man that loved a dram, whose vote was considered doubtful, and thus secure it for himself. This game had been played for some time, and the generosity of Walton, and the niggardliness of Stanmore, was spoken of throughout the district, giving much uneasiness to Edwin's friends.

About two weeks before the election, several of them assembled at the tavern of his honest friend, J. Helvenstein, determined to fall upon some plan to counteract this unfavorable impression, which they feared would be the cause of losing his election. After talking over the matter some time, they finally concluded that they would, without consulting Edwin, take

Walton's plan, and charter the rum-sellers to treat for their candidate also, well knowing that those who are engaged in this traffic, care but little for whom they treat, so they put money in their own purse.

Whilst they were talking the matter over, the good landlady came into the room, and hearing Edwin's name, she loitered to hear what was said, for she felt a warm interest in his success. When she understood what they proposed doing, she turned to them and said :

"Now, gentlemen, I would jist advise you to do no sich thing, without askin' the Squire's opinion about it, for his notions somehow or other always seems to be jist right, and I tell you now if he objects to it, you would best let it alone."

"I don't know but Mamma Helvenstein is about right," replied Joe Jenkins, a substantial farmer, who was an active politician, and a warm friend of Edwin's.

"Yes, but something must be done or we're beat, that's certain;" was the remark of another, "chances seem against us just now."

"Well, suppose we send for the Squire, and talk to him about it," said Joe Jenkins; and, turning to Mrs. Helvenstein, he asked if she had any one she could send.

"Oh, yes; Dick is just at the pump watering the horses, and I'll send him down to the Squire's office, and he'll be with you in less than no time."

True enough, Mrs. Helvenstein's messenger soon did his errand, and Edwin was with his friends in a few minutes. But, in the meantime, it had got whispered, among the frequenters of the grog shops, that Edwin's friends were getting alarmed at the course Walton was pursuing, and had met at old Helvenstein's to devise some plan to counteract it; and the consequence was, a goodly number of them had dropped into the tavern, to see what was going on.

When Edwin arrived, Joe Jenkins gave him a cordial shake of the hand, saying :

"Well, Squire, we're going to be beat, unless we treat as Walton does; and we've sent for you, to tell you this is our

honest opinion, and get your consent to fight him with his own weapons."

"You know, my friends, I would sooner be beaten, than be elected by offering the intoxicating cup to one of my fellow citizens."

"Oh, we know your scrupulousness, Squire; we don't want you to treat, but let us do it."

"That would be worse still, to consent to let my friends do that which I would not do myself. No, no; if I am beaten, let me feel that I have stooped to no means to secure votes, that would degrade me, not only in my own estimation, but in the opinion of all good men. It is my firm conviction that the man who will resort to such means to secure a seat in Congress, will, when that seat is attained, for a consideration, sell his vote and influence to any measure, regardless of the interests of his constituents. The true patriot and statesman knows that the stability of our government, and the prosperity of our country depend upon the sobriety, intelligence, and virtue of the masses; and never, to promote his own personal ambition, will he consent to pander to that appetite, which, more than any other, has a tendency to degrade and brutalize his brother man."

"Squire, don't use quite such strong language," said Joe Jenkins, in an undertone; "see, yonder sits Jim Johnson, and a parcel of fellows, who take their dram daily, down at Smith's, at Walton's expense, and, you know, he's rather a hard customer, when he gets fairly set against a body."

"I cannot help it," said Edwin, looking toward Jim Johnson and his associates, "for it is my opinion, honestly entertained, and independently spoken; and I would no more seek to procure votes by concealing my sentiments, than I would purchase them by intoxicating draughts."

"Then, you will not consent to let us treat."

"Certainly not."

"Then of course we will not do it, but I fear we work to a great disadvantage, yet we honor you the more for your integrity and uprightness of principle."

"I trust I shall ever continue worthy of that esteem, whether

I attain or not the position to which I aspire, and to which your kindness would elevate me."

Jim and his associates, seeing it was decided that the friends of Edwin were not to treat, left the tavern. When he got out side of the door, he said to his companions:

"I tell you what boys, the Squire talks like a book, and what is better, he practices what he preaches. I've seen sights of politicians make mighty fine speeches, but not live up to them themselves. I tell you now, I like his straight forward independent way."

"But you don't intend to vote for him," said one of the boys.

"I have not said who I'll vote for, nor do I intend to, till the morning of the election, when I go to put my ticket in the ballot box. Why, you see boys, politicians are something like a young feller courtin' a gal, as long as he is dubious whether he can get her or not, he's all perliteneess and attention. And it is just so with a politician, as long as he is doubtful about your vote, he is mighty perlite. He will walk clear across the street to shake hands with you, ask after the old woman and the youngsters, and before he leaves you, he will ask you to step into the nearest drinking shop and take something to quinch your thirst. But promise him your vote once, and, not but what he'll treat you just as well when he *does* see you, but then he's not half so sharp sighted at spying you out in every crowd, and at every corner as he used to be. I tell you now, this child has seen so many election days, that he has cut his eye teeth."

"But you'll vote for Colonel Walton, of course?"

"I haven't told any man who I will vote for, nor I don't mean to, not even my old woman."

"But you take your daily bitters down at Smith's, free of charge?"

"Sartingly, you would not expect a chap like me, that pride's himself on his manners, to be guilty of such imperliteneess, as to refuse to *imbibe* when he is kindly invited to do so."

"But we all know it is at Col. Walton's expense?"

"We have no business to know anything about it. I'm asked to take a drink, and do it, asking no questions. On the day of

the election, I mean to deposite my vote for the man I think will make the best representative, and I want you all to do the same. But let us step round to Smith's, and tell him what the Squire and his friends have decided on."

Jim Johnson was a specimen of humanity peculiar to the West. He was fearless, generous, and independent, possessing but little "book larnin'," as he himself expressed it, but a good stock of native shrewdness, which was so improved by observation, that he was enabled to judge of the character of those with whom he came in contact, with much correctness. He was fond of a dram, but never took enough to reduce him to the pitiable condition of a drunkard. His bravery and social qualities, made him a great favorite with the class with whom he associated, hence he was much courted by politicians on account of the influence he possessed in controlling votes.

After Edwin had fully impressed upon the minds of his friends his unyielding determination to permit no treating on his account, he returned to the office. When he had gone, Joe Jenkins said :

"Well, the Squire's right in his notions; but it is mighty hard to act up to them, when you think you are going to be beat by it. However, we will do all we can for him."

In the excitement of the canvass, the days flew rapidly by, and the day that is to decide the contest is finally ushered in. It is a warm August morning; and the principal friends of the two opposing candidates had marshalled their forces; and crowds are collecting in the public square around the court house, preparatory to depositing their votes.

But where is Jim Johnson? He is not among the crowd. The polls will open soon, he ought to be here; it is not customary for him to play laggard on election day. Young Hampton, an active partizan of Col. Walton's, slips round to Jim's house, to ascertain the cause; but not finding him there, he goes to his shop, but neither is he there. He returned to the court house; and he had not been there long before Jim made his appearance. Hampton approached him, and, grasping his hand, said :

"Ah, where have you been, Jim? I have been looking for you."

"I have been taking a little trip through some of the settlements, to have a little private talk with the boys."

"That's right," said he, slapping him approvingly on the shoulder; "we all know the effect of your eloquence."

A bystander observed a queer twinkle in Jim's eye, as he replied :

"I have not been making any display of eloquence, merely telling them a few plain truths."

"All right. Let us go and deposite our votes, then we will be at leisure to look after our friends."

They walked off together, and just as they approached the ballot box, Hampton offered Jim a ticket, remarking :

"I suppose, you have not had time to procure a ticket, since you returned?"

"Yes, I provided myself with one, before I came to the court house."

"Where did you get it?"

"At old Helvenstein's tavern."

"Thunder and blazes!" roared Hampton, with a look of blank dismay; "ain't you going to vote for Col. Walton?"

"No; I've made up my mind to vote for Squire Stanmore."

"Haven't you been taking your bitters free, down at Smith's, for nearly a month?"

"Sartingly: they asked me to drink, and, you know, I never refuse."

"But didn't you know that it was at Col. Walton's expense?"

"I had such a hint, but they did not tell me that I was to vote for Col. Walton on that account. I've read, in an old fashioned book they call the Bible, about one Esau, who sold his birthright for a mess of pottage. Now, I kin tell you, I'm not such an Esau as to sell my glorious birthright, which is the privilege of voting for the man I please to make our laws, for a drink of grog. I did think of voting for Col. Walton, till the day you sent me down to the tavern, to listen to the conference of the Squire and his friends. Well, I did listen, and the upshot of it was, I determined to vote for the Squire."

"Why didn't you say so then?"

"That's again my policy."

"Well, I tell you now, Jim Johnson, it's a real mean trick for you, to be swilling down liquor every day, at Col. Walton's expense, and vote for his opponent."

"Laws a massy ! I'm willing to pay for the lick ; but I heard so much bragging about the Colonel's ginerosity, that I thought the drinks were given free, gratis, for nothing.—Howsomever, if they were given to buy votes to elect him to Congress, he was not so mighty ginerous, after all. So, you can just tell Smith, when he makes out the Colonel's bill, to charge my drinks to me, and I'll pay for them ; for my vote is not to be bought for any such consideration. I would rather pay for them twice, than not vote for the Squire, for I believe as he does : that a man who will buy votes by treating, will, if he should get to Congress, sell his own vote and influence to promote his own personal interest, even to the injury of his constituents, and Jim Johnson's vote shall never help him there. So, here goes for Squire Stanmore," said he, depositing his ticket in the ballot box.

Whilst this conversation was going on, the friends of Col. Walton looked, much crest-fallen, and those of Edwin elated in proportion. Before the closing of the polls, it was very evident that Jim's private talk with the boys had produced its effect ; for nearly every one, whose vote the friends of Col. Walton supposed they had secured for him, when they were offered a ticket by them, declined it, saying : " You can jist tell Smith to charge my drinks to me, 'cause I goes for Squire Stanmore."

It was several days before the returns from all the districts came in, but when they were received, they showed a handsome majority for Edwin. And his friends, who had advised him to sacrifice his principles, for the sake of catching votes, were heard to say :

"The Squire was right ; we now see it proven, that honesty is the best policy, even in politics."

Frederick Leroux, who, when he came to Quincy, intended to spend but a few weeks in Illinois, had become so much interested in the election, that he could not leave until the contest was decided. Now, that it is over, and it is ascertained that his friend

is member elect to Congress, he will leave in a few days. As Mary Selden has concluded to visit the South in company with Frederick and his friends, Mrs. Selden insists, that they, with the young folks of the village, shall spend the evening preceding their departure at her house. The Mansion of the Seldens was one of the largest private residences in the village, surrounded by beautiful grounds, laid out with much taste, and planted with trees, shrubs and flowers. The evening preceding Mary's departure has arrived; the house is filled with glad young hearts, filled with high hopes of happiness. It is a quiet moonlight evening, and many are tempted to stroll forth in the beautiful grounds; and, for aught we know, more than one love tale was whispered on that evening. But, this we do know, that, in a retired walk, there are two conversing so earnestly, that they were forgetful of the gay scene from which they had strayed. But let us listen, perhaps we may learn the import of their conversation.

"Ah, yes, Annie," we hear in the deep earnest tones of Edwin, "the last month has been a dream of happiness too perfect for long continuance on earth, but I can now witness your departure with less regret, that I shall meet you next winter in Washington."

"And, you cannot conceive how much I shall enjoy your triumph, in seeing those who once looked with contempt upon you, courting the attention of the young Congressman, who has raised himself to that position by his own merit."

"For that triumph I care not; yet, the thought that it brings me nearer the realization of the hope, which has been the guiding star of my life, does fill my bosom with glad emotion."

But let us leave them and return to the parlor from whence music and merriment is borne out on the night breeze. Mary moved among her guests like a mirth-inspiring spirit, with a gay jest for this, and bright smile for that. She was standing near the piano, from which she had just risen, chatting merrily with Frederick, when one of her friends approached her, saying:

"So, Miss Selden, you are really going to leave us, to visit that land of oppression and abomination, the South."

"Oh, yes, but I go on a mission of mercy; I have no doubt, but, before I return, I shall, by my eloquence, prevail on Mr. Leroux to liberate all his slaves, and send them to Liberia."

"I promise you this much, Miss Selden, before you go," said Frederick, "that every slave you find on my plantation, who wishes to go to Liberia, shall be sent there at my expense."

"And you give me free permission to set before them the advantages and privileges, that they and their children will derive by going, without letting me be imprisoned or mobbed as an abolitionist?"

"Certainly, you will be my guest, and as such you may say what you please to my people, and no one will say aught against it."

"Mind now, I'll hold you to your promise, you shall not get out of it, by saying you were joking."

"I am in sober earnest, and will not only send every one who wishes to go, but will give them the means of support for one year after they get there."

"See how much good I will do by going South."

"If you do not, it shall not be for want of opportunity."

"Take care, you will find yourself without a servant."

"I will risk that, you have no idea of the feeling that exists between master and slave, until you go to the South. The impression you get from reading articles written by persons, who, perhaps, never saw a Southern plantation, is utterly false; but, ere long, you will see and judge for yourself."

So pleasantly passed the hours, that it was long past midnight ere the guests took their leave. After their departure, as this was the first time Mary had left the paternal roof to be absent for any length of time, there was much advice and admonition to be given, and the last words spoken by her father before she retired, were:

"Now, be careful, and don't take it in your silly head, to fall in love with any of those Southern slaveholders. I know they are high dashing fellows, well calculated to captivate a simple maiden's fancy; but I trust your principles are so well established,

that you will never give your affections to one who can hold his fellow being in bondage."

"Never fear for me, father," said she gayly, and kissing his cheek, she left the room.

Although our young friends retired so late the previous night, the next morning they were up betimes, and ere ten o'clock, they had taken leave of their friends, and were gliding down the Mississippi on board of one of those floating palaces, that so proudly ride upon her bosom.

CHAPTER XXVI.

VISIT TO THE SOUTH.

THE steamer Sultana, the boat on which Frederick and his friends had taken passage, is dashing rapidly forward; the next day will bring them to their destination. Twilight had deepened into darkness; but, in the saloons of that boat, all was brilliancy, mirth and gayety. The passengers had assembled in the ladies' cabin, and strains of delicious music issued from the windows, and wakened the echoes on the silent shores. The trip had been very pleasant; the intercourse of the passengers had been social and agreeable; and, as this was the last evening they would spend together, each feels disposed to contribute all in his power to the amusement of the others. Several songs had been sung, when Eulalie approached Mary Selden, saying:

"Come, give us one of your mirth-provoking songs."

"No," replied she, "for once I will sing something sentimental, just to show the folks, before I leave them, that I can sing something besides comic songs."

Taking her seat at the piano, she sang a sweet little song, that had been a favorite of Ella Stanmore's, and which Ella had often sung for Frederick Leroux. When Mary had finished, she looked up, and saw Frederick, a short distance from her, with a shade of deeper sadness on his brow than she had ever witnessed there before. Rising from the music stool, she went to him, saying merrily:

"Come, 'cast that shadow from thy brow,' and give us a song. You know, each one has to contribute something to the entertainment of the company, this evening, and you, as well as others."

"I seldom sing."

"That is admitting that you do sometimes sing, and this evening must be one of the few times."

"I suppose I must attempt it, if you insist upon it."

Then, taking up a guitar, he ran his fingers over its strings, and brought forth sounds almost as soft as the tones of an *Æolian* harp. Having played a prelude as it were, he sang the following, in a voice full of melody :

Yes, lady, I will sing a strain,
But, fear 'twill be more sad than gay,
For I am thinking of the scenes,
Through which I've passed since boyhood's day.

When 'neath the orange groves I played,
Ere sorrow had my young heart wrung,
And dreamed my own dear home more fair,
Than Persian vales, by Poet's sang.

A father then was by my side,
And counselled oft his wayward boy,
And ah, a mother's gentle smile,
Sent to my heart a thrilling joy.

And ever, when the day was past,
She in the quiet hour of even,
Would call her darling to her side,
And speak to him of God and Heaven.

And then she'd clasp my tiny hands,
And teach to me my evening prayer,
When e'er I think of those past hours,
It seems her spirit hovers near.

Death, o'er that homestead rudely passed,
Father and mother both are gone,
Though 'tis unchanged, it seems less fair,
For I'm alone, ah, all alone.

When he ceased singing, the wild hilarity which had prevailed during the evening, was somewhat subdued, and the voice of more than one, was modulated to a softer tone as he spoke of his mother, and recalled some incident connected with her care and training of his early childhood. Among this number was one, who had been the life of the party during the whole trip. He had traveled much, not only in the United States, but, in foreign lands, and was now returning to his boyhood's home,

where a gentle mother awaited his coming. He was seated beside Annie, and before Frederick commenced singing, he had been telling her of the mischievous frolics, that he and his traveling companions had been engaged in on the continent. He ever being the leading spirit. When Frederick commenced singing, he became silent, and by the time he closed, his countenance was expressive of deep feeling, and his fine dark eye was humid with a tear. Turning to Annie, he said :

"I can truly sympathize with your cousin. Fortune has showered on me many blessings, but that which I esteem the greatest, is a pious gentle mother, who also taught me in early life my evening prayers, and in mercy she is spared to bless me still, with her kind counsels and gentle admonitions. I have been a wild and wayward wanderer, engaging in many mad adventures, from the love of mischief; but the remembrance of her pious teaching, ever restrained me from falling into gross vice, or yielding to debasing appetites."

To train the young mind thus, is woman's holiest mission on earth, her noblest right, a right, nature has clearly defined and established.

And when we see her attending conventions, and making speeches to establish her title to other rights, which she fancies should be hers, we feel that her character is somewhat divested of that sacredness which is now attached to it—but we do not intend to read a homily on woman's rights, so we will return to our story.

The evening passed pleasantly away in interesting conversation, and when the hour for retiring arrived, each felt something like regret that this was the last evening they should spend together.

The next morning, they had arrived in that region of the South where the rich sugar plantations stretch along the banks of the Mississippi. The breakfast hour had just passed, when Frederick asked Miss Selden to step on the guards with him, as his own plantation would soon be in sight. True enough, the acres he called his own, soon met his riveted gaze. The family mansion, which reared itself proudly in the distance, was plainly visible.

A few more revolutions of the ponderous machinery, which propels the swift traveling Sultana, and the humbler whitewashed dwellings, which are inhabited by the slaves, are also seen peeping from the shade trees by which they are surrounded. Ere long the point where boats land is in view, and on the bank is seen a carriage; whilst the driver sits on the seat, holding the lines, beside it stand two individuals, looking earnestly towards the boat. They both look to be about Frederick's own age. One is a white man, the other a negro. They had not looked thus long, when the colored man turned to his companion, saying :

"Yes, there is Mass Fred, shure enough."

"Where? I do not see him."

"Jist on the guards, with a lady on his arm."

"I see several gentlemen on the guards, with ladies on their arm, but do not distinguish, at this distance, Fred from the others."

"Laws, Master Collingwood, I can tell Mass Fred among a thousand, as far as I can see him. That's him, pinting towards us."

"Ah, yes; I recognize him, now."

Perhaps our readers would like to know who Master Collingwood is; so, let us hear what Frederick says of him, as he points him out to Miss Selden.

"See, awaiting us, on the shore, Francis Collingwood, one of the dearest friends I have on earth. I know you will admire him. I have never spoken of him to you, although he has resided with me for the last three years; and, as I am rather disinclined to business, and have been much from home during that time, he has taken charge of my people and plantation during that time."

"Or, to express it in phrase more homely," said Mary, "he is your negro driver. I am determined to hate him."

"I doubt whether you will be able to continue in that determination, when you know him. He is amiable, elegant, intellectual and refined."

"Then, his occupation and character are strangely inconsistent."

"The occupation you apply to him exists only in your imagination, whilst his noble, generous qualities are real."

"Did you not say he had taken charge of your plantation and people for the last three years?"

"I did."

"Well, we, of the north, know well enough what that means."

"At least, you think you do."

"I am sure we do."

It is evident, from Mary's remarks, that she thought Francis Collingwood an overseer on Frederick Leroux's plantation. But in this she was mistaken.

At this moment, the boat touched the shore; the plank was put out, and Francis Collingwood was on the boat, with the hand of Frederick clasped in his own. Fred had barely time to reply to his hearty "God bless you," and present him to Miss Selden, when the other, who had watched the approach of the boat so eagerly, was by his side, his face beaming with happiness. Frederick grasped his hand, saying:

"How have you been, Charley, during my absence?"

"Right well, Mass Fred, and mighty glad to see you."

"Well, how is mammy, and Hannah, and Aunt Gracey, and Uncle Harry, and all the rest of them?"

"All well but mammy; she had the rheumitiz. But when she heard you war coming, she got up well right strate, and has been moving about the house as spry as if she was only twenty."

Whilst this colloquy was going on between Charley and his master, Mary looked on with surprise, wondering Frederick was not ashamed to talk so familiarly and put himself upon such equality with a negro, in such a crowd. She did not understand the warm feeling of friendship that exists between master and slave, and thought he should treat him as the wealthy man of the North treats the poor man who serves him faithfully, scarcely deigning to speak to him civilly; for fear of compromising his dignity. After Frederick had inquired after his people, he said to Charley:

"Now, you go look after our baggage, whilst Collingwood and I see the ladies in the carriage."

Then turning to his friend, he said :

" Let us be getting on land, and not detain the boat longer than necessary."

In a few moments, our traveling party, with their baggage, was on shore, and the Sultana moved gracefully off, on her way to the Crescent City. They remained a short time on the bank, watching the boat as she moved proudly forward on the broad bosom of the Mississippi, whilst a many delicately 'broidered 'kerchief was waved, as an adieu, from her guards. When Frederick had assisted the ladies into the carriage, and saw them seated, he told the coachman to drive on, and he and his friend would walk to the house. When the carriage had started, he turned to Collingwood, and said :

" I feared you might possibly not be at the landing."

" You need have given yourself no uneasiness on that score ; for, from the time we received your letter, saying you would be home on the Sultana, mammy, who, you know, says she knows every boat on the river before it comes in sight by its puffing, has kept her ears wide open that she might tell us when the Sultana was coming. This morning, sometime before you came in sight, she ordered David to bring out the carriage, and go down to the landing, for you would soon be here. I doubted much whether it were so ; but, to please her, came down, and it turned out she either does know the boats by their puff, as she calls it, or, in this instance, she had guessed very shrewdly."

The ladies had just alighted from the carriage when Frederick came in sight. Mammy was standing at the gate to receive the ladies, and do the honors of the house with becoming dignity ; but when she saw Frederick, she forgot ladies, dignity, and every thing else, but her darling child, as she always called him. She ran to meet him as fast as her old limbs would carry her, and when she came near enough, she seized his hand, and covering it with kisses, said as soon as she had sufficient breath :

" Lord bless you, honey, so you is got home at last. 'Deed, child, you does mighty wrong to go away and stay so long and give poor old mammy so much uneasiness about you. You knows there is nobody to care for you now, like I does."

And the faithful creature wiped a tear from her eye, on the corner of her smoothly ironed white apron, as Frederick replied:

"I know it mammy, I know it, and regard your faithful love, as one of the few blessings now left me on earth."

"Then honey, don't go away and stay so long agin."

"I have come home with the intention of staying with my people, and trying to make them happy."

"Oh, they are happy enough, all they want is to see your blessed face among them. Master Collingwood is as kind and considerate as you can be, and they all love him next to you."

Just at this moment it occurred to her that she had forgotten to attend to the ladies, but Hannah, more thoughtful than her mother, had conducted them into the drawing-room, where Mary was now standing beside one of the windows, observing with much interest the look of devoted affection manifest in mammy's countenance, and the kind attention with which Frederick treated her. When they entered the drawing-room, mammy welcomed Annie kindly, and then courtesied to the other ladies without speaking, as if waiting for an introduction.

"Have you forgotten little Eulalie Dupré, that used to play with me, and who was so great a favorite of yours?"

Mammy looked into the face of each. As the eye of Eulalie met her searching gaze, a smile passed over her countenance, and the old woman recognized her immediately. Having expressed her pleasure at seeing her again, she turned to Madame Dupré, and taking her hand respectfully, she said:

"I know this is Madame Dupré, I shall never forget her, for she was such a dear friend of my mistress, who is now a saint in Heaven."

Frederick now stepped to Mary's side, saying:

"Miss Selden, permit me to present to you my faithful nurse, of whom you have heard me speak so frequently; I know you will find her all I have represented her."

Mary, from her northern education, not having been accustomed to treat the blacks with that genuine kindness and cordiality, which characterize the intercourse of the Southern people with their faithful and attached house servants, scarcely knew

how to receive this introduction. But when mammy approached her with a respectful courtesy, she extended her hand to her, which she took with much respect, saying:

"I hope Miss Selden, you will enjoy your visit to 'Happy Valley.'"

Frederick, when he first read *Rasselas*, had given this name to his home, and it had retained it ever since.

Mammy, after having attended to every thing necessary for the comfort of the ladies, still loitered as if unwilling to lose sight of her dear child. Finally she left the room, but soon appeared again at the door, and beckoned to Frederick, unseen as she supposed, by any but himself. Mary had observed it, for there was something about this old woman that interested her exceedingly, and caused her to note all her acts. Frederick stepped out, and to his inquiry of what she wished, she told him, "the people who were not in the fields had heard of his return, and were all anxious to come and see him, but did not know if he would like for them to come up, as there were strange ladies in the house."

"Certainly they can come, and when the field hands come to dinner, they need not return to work, but have a holiday, and I will call and see them all during the afternoon."

Soon after mammy's message was sent, at least thirty persons, young and old, had collected in front of the family mansion, to welcome Frederick home. As Mary looked on this scene from the window at which she was seated, and heard the hearty "God bless you, Master Fred," of the old men and women as they gathered round him, and saw the looks of gratification with which even the children listened to the words of kindness addressed to them by their master, she said within herself, "This is certainly a different picture from what I anticipated looking upon. These people look cheerful and happy—But I will not form conclusions hastily—this is the first day,—I have only seen the surface, but before I leave, I will make myself thoroughly acquainted with the feelings of these people, and ascertain if their cheerfulness be affected or real."

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE SUSTAINING POWER OF TRUE PIETY.

LET us leave, for a time, Annie and her friends to enjoy the pleasure to be derived from their pleasant social intercourse with the warm-hearted citizens of the Sunny South, whose manners are as genial as their clime.

Let the imagination of the reader go back some years. We will look again upon the scene where three figures, in the innocence and beauty of young girlhood, are kneeling before the altar to receive the holy sacrament of baptism. Of these three, one, whose meek and gentle spirit unfitted her to battle with life's stern realities, had passed from earth. The second is in the possession of every enjoyment prosperity can give, whilst her heart is filled with bright hopes for the future. And the young life of the third is overshadowed with cares and trials that must have overwhelmed her, but for the pure light of religion which illumined her path when the dark clouds of sorrow rested upon it, and soothed and strengthened her anxious and wearied spirit, when there was no earthly friend to speak a word of comfort. Yes, dark and deep were the waves of affliction that swept over the spirit of Emma Carlton. During the summer, whilst hope and happiness grew brighter in the heart of Annie Grayson, sickness, which is ever a sore trial to those who earn a support by the labor of their hands, had entered the pleasant abode of Mrs. Carlton, and not only had it entered, but it lingered long.

It was the latter part of August when Mrs. Carlton was seized with a violent attack of fever which lasted sometime, and brought her near the grave. But Emma procured for her the best medical attendance to be had in the city, and that, with watchful

nursing, saved her from death, but left her weak and helpless as an infant. The expenses incurred by her mother's illness, when defrayed, left her without money. Added to this was the loss of the work of her best customers; for having come to get their work for the fall and winter done during her mother's illness, when she could not attend to it, they had made engagements to have it done elsewhere. The winter was just at hand, her money all gone, and no certainty of procuring work, whilst her mother was still very weak, needing those delicacies which the sick crave. Emma scarce knew what course to pursue, but she did not remain in doubt long; for, with that prompt energy which was a striking trait in her character, she at once decided what she would do, and as soon as her plans were formed, she set about executing them. She sold all her furniture, save enough to furnish one room, and then procured a single room, in a portion of the city where rents were cheap, and had the furniture removed to it. Having arranged it in a neat and tasty manner, which gave an air of comfort to the humble apartment, she had her mother, who was still very feeble, brought in a carriage to their new home, as she called it. It was the twilight hour, when she had completed all her arrangements, and was ready to assist her mother from the carriage, as it drove up to the door. Oh, it was beautiful, to look upon the smile that illumined her face, as she arranged the rocking chair, which she had retained for her mother's comfort, saying :

"Sit down, and rest yourself, mother dear, whilst I prepare you a cup of tea."

"I think it is you that should rest," said the mother sadly, "you have been on your feet since morning's light."

"Yes, but I am young and well."

"True; but those who are young and in health may be worn down by incessant toil, such as you have endured for some time past."

"Our heavenly father has promised he will give strength to those who put their trust in him, equal to the trials he permits to fall upon them."

"I am glad you can feel thus," said the mother, with a sigh.

"When you drink a cup of tea, you will feel less despondent," said Emma, arranging the tea things on a little table, at one side of the room, and placing several delicacies on it, that she had purchased to tempt her mother to eat.

When they had partaken of the evening meal, Emma washed and put the tea things away, listened to Leila say her evening prayers, put her in bed, and tucking the clothes about her, to make her comfortable, she gave her a good-night kiss, saying: "God keep you, my darling." She then knelt down beside her mother, whose countenance still wore a troubled look, and, taking her pale attenuated hand within her own, she pressed it to her lips, saying:

"Mother dear, do not look so sad, we have still much to be thankful for."

"Much to be thankful for!" repeated Mrs. Carlton, in a fretful tone. "I suppose I must be thankful for being reduced from living in genteel style to be the occupant of one small room, and that but scantily furnished!"

"No, mother, but thankful that we are not reduced to positive destitution."

"If we are not positively destitute, we are precious near it, and if you do not get work, it will not be long before we have nothing to eat. And I'm not thankful to barely have something to eat, and that procured by incessant labor, whilst I see others, who spend their time in idleness, living in fine houses, furnished in the most costly style, and pampering their appetites with every delicacy the market affords. No, no, I will not be thankful, when I see such an unequal distribution of the goods of this world, for the small pittance that falls to my share."

"That is the spirit with which too many in this city look upon life. Possessing everything requisite for comfort and convenience, still they will not enjoy it, but indulge in a spirit of repining, because they see others, in possession of more wealth, and surrounded by luxuries and elegances which their means will not justify, and which are not necessary to happiness, but to the gratification of vanity and foolish pride. Although but young, my lessons of life have taught me, true happiness does not de-

pend on the mere external circumstances by which we are surrounded, but upon our own spirit. I venture to say, there is many a proud beauty, surrounded by all that wealth can purchase, who does not feel half the happiness that swells my bosom, as I look around this humble room, and feel that I can contribute, by my exertions, to the comfort of my mother."

"You are a dear good child, and I do feel thankful for your love and untiring patience."

"Now, dear mother, I have talked so much, I fear I have wearied you, let me sing something for you. You know you always say my voice hath a spell to drive away discontented thoughts, and make you forget, for a time, the change of fortune that has fallen on us."

"I fear such would not be the case to-night—I should miss the tones of your guitar which you touched so lightly, and that would fill my mind with the thought of the poverty, which had obliged us to sell even that."

"Better the guitar should be gone than the voice."

"You could not sell your voice."

"No, but I might be afflicted with some disease that would destroy the voice, so you see, if we look at things aright, we can always find something to be thankful for."

"You reason strangely, but I wish I could look upon things as you do. It would make me more content."

"Indeed it would. And mother, you can see things as I do if you will try. Whenever you feel an inclination to repine, just reflect that this world is only a state where the spirit is prepared for the next; and it may be the trials sent are necessary to purify it, and fit us for the enjoyment of that perfect bliss promised the pure in heart."

"Well, child, sing your song, I'll think of it."

Emma rose from her kneeling position, and imprinting a kiss on her mother's pale cheek, sang in a voice attuned to sweetest melody:

Give me, oh God, a grateful heart,
For all the gifts Thou'st given,
But most, that Thou hast taught my soul,
Its treasures are in Heaven.

This life is but a span, a breath,
That quickly flits away,
Bearing along the pure in heart,
To joys, that ne'er decay.

I'd rather have a spirit meek,
Without a sinful stain,
Than all the wealth that ere was borne
Across the Spanish main.

Not all the precious gems of Ind,
Can soothe an aching heart;
Nor cast one ray upon our path
When we from life depart.

I will not covet things so vain,
But ask for heavenly love
To guide my footsteps here on earth,
And lead my thoughts above.

Then, when this form of earthly mould
Lies cold beneath the sod,
My spirit shall triumphant rise,
To sing the praise of God.

When Emma had finished her song, a tear-drop glistened in the eye of Mrs. Carlton, and looking on her daughter, she said :

"I have been ungrateful, that I have not been thankful for the love and kindness of such a child as you. Yes, I will learn to look upon life as you do, and not regard riches as the greatest blessing bestowed upon mortals."

"The greatest blessing, which is the grace of God, is bestowed upon all who will receive it, both rich and poor. Oh how often the heart becomes perverted in the pursuit of riches and becomes unfitted for the reception of that Divine grace that gives, even upon earth, a perception of the joys of Heaven. Yet, I would not condemn riches, for when it is possessed by a kind and generous heart, it is a beneficent gift from the Creator, enabling its possessor to do good to his fellow creatures. But when it is regarded only as a means of gratifying our own vanity, and tyrannizing over those less fortunate than ourselves, it becomes a curse, because it makes us forgetful of the Giver of every good and perfect gift."

"That is the light in which I have ever regarded it, but as you were singing, whilst the tones of your voice fell soothingly on my ear, the words you uttered crept into my heart, and I felt how utterly false was the estimate I had placed upon wealth, and how greatly I had mistaken the purposes of life. I realized the worthlessness of those vanities and pleasures I had so much coveted, but which pass so quickly away, and I resolved to cultivate that spirit which will fit me for the enjoyment of 'joys that ne'er decay.'"

"Do so, dear mother, then we shall be happy indeed. For, if we have peace and sunlight in our own hearts, we are strong to bear the buffetings of the world from without."

"Yes, yes, it must be so, or how could you have borne so patiently with my querulousness."

"Speak not of it dear mother; you have been so ill."

"I will not speak more to-night, for I am weary and would rest."

Emma undressed her mother, as she had been in the habit of doing since her illness, and when she had got into bed, drew the cover around her with as much care as if she had been an infant. Wearied with the excitement of the day, Mrs. Carlton soon sank into a gentle slumber. When Emma was assured she slept, she stepped forth into the soft moonlight, and casting her eyes toward the blue arch of heaven, gemmed with myriad stars, and poured forth the emotions that swelled in her bosom, in the following language:

"Oh, heavenly father, I thank thee for the mercies and gifts thou hast bestowed, but particularly for the gift of song, if, by that means, I win the heart of my darling mother from its devotion to the trifles and vanities of life, to seek that pearl of great price compared to which all else is dross. I shall regard all the privations we have endured as blessings, if it cause my mother to seek for happiness from that source from which true happiness is only found. Ah, yes, I could pass through even greater trials, were it required of me."

Could they, who had called her gloriously beautiful, when in the pride of prosperity as she moved a bright star in the gay and

fashionable throng, charming all by the sweet warbling of her songs, have looked upon her now, with hands clasped and face upturned to heaven, and illumined with the high, pure and holy thoughts with which her heart was filled, they would have deemed her divinely fair. One could almost fancy she was some being from a higher sphere as she stood thus, with the moonbeams falling upon her pale pure brow.

Ever, when she was deeply moved, she loved to turn her gaze upon the star-gemmed heavens, and as she poured forth the aspirations of her heart, she felt as if she were in the very presence of God, and holding intercourse with him as with a familiar friend; and it was this that sustained her under all her trials.

After communing thus, when she entered the humble apartment, she noted not its lowliness, for her soul was filled with happiness, and her thoughts were of that bright home which is destined for the pure-minded. And she herself proves the truth of her own words, that happiness does not depend upon external circumstances, but upon the spirit within.

As a farther proof of the truth of this remark, let us take a peep into a luxuriously furnished apartment in one of the proudest mansions of the city. Clementina Wilkie is walking hurriedly to and fro, as if too much excited to remain quiet. Her features, which are cast in nature's perfect mould, are distorted by the evil and ungoverned passions that rage in her bosom, till not one trace of beauty is discernible; and her dark eyes, whose glances are so soft and languishing when she wishes to captivate some unsuspecting heart, now gleam with a fiendish expression. At length, she stops in the centre of the room, and stamping violently, gives utterance to the following words:

"What! I, who have ruled her since a mere child, permitting her to have no will but my own, to lose my influence now! No, no, I have never yet failed to accomplish anything when I willed it. Jenny *shall* be sent home. Why, the minx, from rivaling me in the affections of my aunt, she will next rival me in society! I committed an error in proposing to my aunt to send her to school, for these nuns have managed to give her manners a polish that makes her almost equal to those who have

been in society all their lives. But she must go home, that I have resolved upon."

Having said this, she threw herself into a seat, and you could perceive, by the play of her features, that angry and vindictive feelings were raging in her bosom, and all the luxury by which she was surrounded gave her no pleasure.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE WILL.

WE left Clementina Wilkie, the beautiful, the accomplished and intellectual, greatly excited, by yielding to her own un-governed passions. We will now go back a little, and let our readers know the cause of this excitement.

Sickness had, during the summer, visited the proud mansion of which she was a resident, as well as the humbler home of Emma Carlton, and death, whose approach gold cannot stay, had also entered. Mr. Parkinson, the wealthy merchant, had paid the last debt, the debt of nature. Ere he died he made a will, and, having no relatives for whom he had any affection, he devised the whole of his immense wealth, which consisted in houses, stocks and money, to his wife, to dispose of as she chose at her death. Money could not stay the approach of death, neither could it purchase relief from suffering. His illness was long and severe. Although Mrs. Parkinson had never loved him in the deepest, truest sense of the word, yet gratitude to him for having raised her from poverty and placed her in affluence, and his constant indulgence of all her extravagant whims and caprices, caused her to regard him kindly. And when she saw him stretched upon a sick bed, suffering intensely, and felt that her presence was a gratification, she was ever near; and if his voice feebly moaned her name, she was by his side. Some uncharitably disposed persons attributed this unwearied attention to interested motives, saying it was to secure the making of a will in her favor; but we will do her the justice to say such was not the case.

She did not feel the effects of the fatigue and excitement she had undergone, until after the funeral was over ; then it was apparent she had overtaken her energies, and ere a week had passed by, she, too, was prostrated on a bed of sickness, from which she did not rise for weeks. During this time, Clementina, who had anticipated a brilliant season at Saratoga and other fashionable places of Summer resort, was seldom in the sick room, and when she was there, it was to utter discontent at having been obliged to remain in the city, when every person who was anybody was absent. But Jenny was ever beside her aunt. When tossing restlessly in fever, it was her hand that raised the cooling draught to her parched lips, and when her temples were throbbing with pain, it was she that re-arranged the pillows, and placed upon her burning brow the cloths dipped in ice water. She would not leave these offices to be performed by a hireling nurse. Finally, the violence of the disease had passed, and she became convalescent ; but Jenny was still near her, that she might not be alone to indulge in sad thoughts. As Mrs. Parkinson grew stronger, Jenny would read to her, to make the time hang less heavily on her hands ; or, if she tired of that, she would talk to her of little incidents that had occurred in Aunt Parkinson's childhood, that she had heard from grandmother ; thus calling to mind, vividly, scenes long past, and almost forgotten. For when she was in the pride of health, and in the pursuit of wordly pleasure, her thoughts never rested for a moment on the humble home of her childhood. Now sickness had chastened her spirit, and she called up the reminiscences of that period. Many salutary reflections now passed through the bosom of Mrs. Parkinson. She no longer looked on life through a false medium. While in this state, she was led to contrast the character of her two nieces, and she was forced to acknowledge to herself, that, although in time of health Clementina had been her pride, in the hour of sickness Jenny had been her ministering angel, and she determined, as soon as she had sufficient strength to arrange her business, she would make a will dividing her property equally between her nieces. The day upon the evening of which we see Clementina so much excited, she had sent for an

attorney, and ordered him to draw up a will to this effect, and when it was ready for her signature, to bring it to her ; also to bring witnesses with him, that she might sign it, "For," she said, "I feel that I hold life by an uncertain tenure, and I would have it arranged."

The lawyer for whom she had sent, was a young man who had often transacted business for her husband, and in whom she had the utmost confidence. But she did not know that young Allington, who was more shrewd and far-seeing than many who were older in the profession, and at the same time wanting in that strict probity which should ever be found in gentlemen who belong to the bar, had sometimes thought that, when a few more years had slipped by, and the charms of Clementina were on the wane, that he might then become a suitor for her hand, and appropriate to himself the belle and the fortune. When he left the room of Mrs. Parkinson, he stopped in the parlor, where Miss Wilkie was alone practicing a new song. She motioned him to be seated, and without deigning to notice him farther, went on practicing her music. He was a poor and undistinguished lawyer, and she thought it useless to waste smiles and fine speeches on him. He sat patiently till she had finished her song, and then said quietly :

"Miss Wilkie, your aunt summoned me to attend to some business."

"So I supposed ; knowing you transacted business for my uncle before his death, I presumed she would continue to patronize you, on account of your being a son of an old friend of his."

"She wishes me to write a will."

"There is nothing strange in that, as her health is not very good."

"No, but the disposition of the Parkinson property will be somewhat different from what I supposed it would."

"Did you expect to be the heir ?"

"Certainly not, but I supposed the entire property would belong to Miss Wilkie ; but I have directions to write a will dividing it equally between you and Miss Lumpkin. Would it not be well enough for you to speak to your aunt about it, this even-

ing ? and I will call again, in the morning, before writing the will : she may change her mind. I know it was her intention, before her mind was weakened by sickness, to devise the whole property to you."

Without waiting for a reply, he rose, and bade her good evening, knowing his words had made just the impression on her that he wished. He knew well enough she would not speak to her aunt about it, but was impressed with the belief, that she would make a proposition to him, in the morning, to write a will to suit her purpose, and have it signed by her aunt, without knowing its contents.

It was this knowledge of her aunt's intentions, with regard to the disposition of her property, that threw Clementina into the excited state in which we left her.

In the first burst of indignation, she determined Jenny should return immediately to her friends, in Illinois ; but, upon reflection, she changed opinion, and devised another plan for the accomplishment of her purposes, as the following conversation with young Allington will show. That he might not be interrupted, in the confidential conference he expected to hold with Miss Wilkie, he called immediately after breakfast. Clementina was already in the parlor, awaiting him, and to his inquiry if she had spoken to her aunt, she replied :

"I did not think it worth while to trouble her. As you, yesterday, remarked, her mind is very much weakened by sickness ; in fact, I think it quite deranged ; therefore, I thought it would be well to write the will, making me sole heir to her estates. I presume you have heard her, as well as my uncle, say, I was to be heir to all they possessed ?"

"I have."

"If she should wish to hear the will read before signing it, you can read it as if it were written as she directed it yesterday."

"I will do as you wish me, Miss Wilkie, for a consideration."

"Of course ; name the amount, and it is yours when I come into possession."

"You deem me sordid."

"I know, money, to a young man just beginning life, is very necessary to his success."

"The love of money is the absorbing passion of the old; but in the hearts of the young, other passions strive for mastery."

"Speak plainly."

"The meanest creature on earth covets the sunlight."

"Well."

"And I have dared to look with admiration, aye, love, upon her, who is, among the ordinary beauties by whom she is surrounded, as the sun among the stars."

Clementina started as if an adder had stung her, for she felt she had put herself into the power of an unprincipled man, beyond recall. Without seeming to notice the effects his words produced, he continued:

"The proposition I would make is this, that if, five years from this time, you are still unmarried, I may claim your hand. Promise me this, and I am yours to do your bidding."

"I can promise that without hesitation, but would notify you, at the same time, that the proposition you have made is rather an unprofitable one on your part, as I design leaving the state of single blessedness ere that time."

"Then, the loss be mine."

Saying this, he rose to leave the room; but, when he got to the door, he turned, and fixing his keen eyes upon her face, said:

"Miss, we understand each other?"

She almost withered beneath his glance, but had sufficient self control to seem unconcerned, whilst she replied in a steady voice:

"We do."

She felt something like a sense of relief, when he left her presence, but she was still uncomfortable. She felt that she was no longer independent, but in the power of another, and that other, a most unprincipled knave. The head of the proud Clementina was bowed in deep thought, for a presentment of evil and exposure rested upon her.

True, it was dim and distant, but it rested upon her like a shadow that she could not shake off. She tried to reason herself into the belief that she had no cause for feeling thus, that she

was only causing to be executed, by a little strategy, the wishes of Mr. Parkinson, and also those of her aunt, when in her sane mind; for she actually strove to bring herself into the belief that her aunt was not sane. The work of this morning caused Clementina many a bitter regret in after years.

When Allington left the parlor, he went to Mrs. Parkinson's room, told her he would come the next day, prepared to have the business she had commissioned him to attend to, completed. Punctual to his appointment, he, accompanied by two gentlemen as witnesses, was at Mrs. Parkinson's the next day.

As Clementina had anticipated, her aunt requested to have the will read. Allington read it; and to his inquiry if it was as she wished, she replied it was. She then put her signature to it, as did also the witnesses; and when Allington had sealed it, and been requested by Mrs. Parkinson to keep it in his possession, he felt that his fortune was secured.

Ere leaving the house, he took the opportunity of speaking a few words to Clementina. Showing her the sealed package, he said :

"My part of the compact is completed."

To which she replied :

"And so will mine be, when the time stipulated arrives; but until that comes, let not a word upon the subject be spoken between us."

"Your will shall be my law, my lips are sealed."

She would now gladly have ordered him from her presence, but the imperious Clementina was obliged to repress the haughty words that trembled on her lips, and address him in courteous language. Turning to him, she said :

"The transactions of the past two days have excited me. I would be alone."

He rose from his seat, and instead of his former cringing servile manner, he bowed with something like stateliness, saying :

"I will no longer annoy Miss Wilkie with my presence."

She watched him till he passed from her sight, and then throwing herself on a sofa, she thus soliloquized :

"I feel as if I were in the toils of a demon. What a pity we

cannot use such creatures to accomplish our purposes, without putting ourselves in their power. Already, he assumes a triumphant bearing towards me. But I will disappoint him in one respect. Ere he shall have the privilege of claiming my hand, I will wed before the expiration of five years, even if it be the commonest laborer who earns his bread by the sweat of his brow."

But, starting suddenly up, she placed herself before the mirror, and contemplating her superb figure, she continued her soliloquy.

"But why should I talk thus; have I lost the power of making conquests? No, no, I will queen it over hearts more proudly this coming winter than I have ever done before, and at its close I will make my selection from among those who offer incense at my shrine."

Whilst the bosom of Clementina is filled with undefined fears of she knows not what, the heart of Jenny is the abode of content. The generous and pure sentiments that dwell in her bosom, are reflected in her face, giving to her beauty a charm that wins upon the heart far more than the brilliant Clementina. At least so thought a medical student, who had nearly completed his studies, and who sometimes accompanied the attending physician, when he visited his patient. Indeed so interested was he, that often when sitting in the office with an open book before him, instead of deciphering medical terms, he was dreaming of a home in the West, whilst the tones of a soft sweet voice fall musically on his ear. Take care, Charley Danforth, your heart is irretrievably snared in the meshes of love if you indulge in such reveries. Could your mamma, who thinks life not worth possessing, unless it be passed in a city, read thy heart's imaginings, she would not so often say to you:

"I cannot conceive, Charley, what has put it in your foolish head, to think of going way out to Illinois, where you will have to encounter wolves, bears, Indians, fevers, ague, and every hateful thing that makes life horrid?"

And Jenny, as she sits beside her aunt, watching, often, while she sleeps, does she not too, sometimes, wonder, whether the young medical student will settle in their vicinity, for he ha.

told her he intends going West, to practice his profession when he has completed his studies.

What Jenny's thoughts are we will not say, but we can tell what her acts are. Her aunt, instead of recovering her health, remains feeble, so much so, that she seldom leaves her room, except when she goes out in her carriage to take an airing. The fever has left her with a cough, which causes the physician to look grave whenever it falls upon his ear. Jenny notes this, and whilst Clementina is spending her time in shopping and preparing for the gayeties of the winter, she remains with her aunt to attend to all her wishes; and it may be, that the certainty of seeing the young medical student almost every day, and enjoying with him a conversation about Western people, their manners, modes of thinking, and independence of character, was sufficient compensation for this self-denial.

CHAPTER XXIX.

FREDERICK LEROUX AT HOME.

THE long, bright, sunny, sultry, summer days have passed, and the *elite* of Washington, who, to avoid the dust and heat of August, went to Shannondale, Warrenton, Piney Point, or some other place where the votaries of fashion do assemble, have returned to their city homes, and are busy in making preparations for the enjoyments of the gayeties of the coming winter. Among those who have returned is Mrs. Grayson. Winter is almost here, but Annie is still absent. What detains her? She lingers in the sunny South, reluctant to leave those friends whose frank social manner is so entirely in accordance with her own feelings, and return to that heartless ceremonious intercourse, which characterizes the fashionable society of cities.

But this reminds us we promised to give our readers Miss Selden's opinion of slavery, after she had been sometime on a plantation, and made herself acquainted, by actual observation, with the condition of the poor oppressed Africans. But to do so, we must go back and present to the reader some of the scenes that she witnessed on the plantation.

One morning, about a week after his arrival at home, when Frederick descended to the drawing-room a little earlier than usual, he found Hannah still there giving a last polish to the furniture in the room. After finishing it, she lingered as if she had something to say ; Frederick observing it, said :

" Well, Hannah, what do you want ? "

" Why, Aunt Susie would like to have you take dinner with her, seeing it has been so long since you eat a bite in her cabin,

and she did not know if it would be proper to ask the strange ladies too."

"Certainly, tell her to ask the ladies by all means.

"She said, would it be convenient for you to dine with her day after to-morrow?"

"It will be convenient for me, and I presume the ladies have no engagement for that day."

"Shall I run over to Aunt Susie's cabin and tell her so?"

"Yes."

Hannah had not left the room long, before Annie and Miss Selden entered.

"I have just received an invitation to dine out day after to-morrow," said Frederick, "and have accepted it, provided you ladies do not object!"

"Of course we will not object."

"So I thought."

"But who is it? Where?" burst from the lips of each.

A smile played over Frederick's face, and he turned to Miss Selden, saying:

"You remember the cabin among the shade trees, and your admiration of the neatness and taste observable in all its surroundings?"

"Perfectly."

"Well, it is there, and the invitation is from Aunt Susie, its occupant."

"Quite complimentary, I'll declare, to be invited to dine with an old negro woman."

"I promised you should have every opportunity of becoming acquainted with the feeling that exists between master and slave, therefore, I accepted the invitation, provided you did not object."

"Of course I do not object, but there is something odd in the idea of receiving a ceremonious invitation to dine in the cabin of a negro slave. May I expect this honor from the occupants of the many other cabins, I see on your plantation."

"None I presume will honor us thus, save Aunt Susie. She, you must know, is a sister of my old nurse, and filled the place

of cook, until Judy our present cook, who is her daughter, was sufficiently initiated in the culinary art, to take charge of the kitchen. My father then had the cabin where she now lives built for her, that she might, as she was growing old, be relieved from constant labor, and yet sufficiently near, to see to getting up dinners for extraordinary occasions. I had always been much indulged by her, and after she moved to her cabin, if Judy did not gratify my whims by cooking anything I chose to desire, I went to Aunt Susie to make my complaint, well assured that the dish coveted would be prepared by her own hands.

"When I came home, after my first term at college, it was beneath my dignity to go to Aunt Susie to make a complaint if my favorite dish was not on the table, but she, thinking some extra attention was due me as a collegian, would occasionally prepare a dinner that she knew suited my taste and ask me to dine with her. Thus you see it is her custom to manifest her regard for me by giving me a dinner party, particularly when I have been absent from home and have just returned."

"Oh, it will be delightful to make one of the guests at a dinner party in Aunt Susie's cabin; I have no doubt but I shall enjoy it as much as I should a dinner in the White House, at the invitation of the President of the United States."

"And I shall enjoy it much more, taking the word in its true sense. In dining at the President's, I feel the invitation is given as a mere matter of ceremony, but when invited to dine at Aunt Susie's, I know the invitation is a manifestation of her devoted attachment."

"Well, I shall enjoy it because it will be a novelty."

"Then ladies, with your permission, I will call during the day and notify Aunt Susie, her invitation is accepted."

"Oh yes, do so by all means."

About an hour later in the day we see Fred seated on the portico of Aunt Susie's cabin, and the face of this faithful old house servant gleams with a smile of gratification as she gazes fondly on the fine form of her young master, as she still calls Fred, although the old one has been dead some years. But let us hear what she says:

"So, the ladies will all come?"

"Yes; they will all come with pleasure."

"I knew well enough Madame Dupré and Miss Eulalie would have no objection, for I was well acquainted with them, in dear Missus' life-time, and they're raal born ladies, no upstart about them. And as for Miss Annie, is'ent she Missus' own niece, jist like her, for all the world; so kind and thoughtful, would'nt hurt nobody's feelins for nothing. But as to that lady from the north, it seems like she kind of keeps herself distant, as much as to say, I den't want to be too sociable with the niggers."

"You are altogether mistaken in your impressions; she takes a great interest in the condition of the colored people."

"Well, well, may be she does, but still the northern ladies don't seem like our own raal ladies. May be, when I know her better, I won't think as I do now."

When Frederick rose to leave, he said:

"You know, Aunt Susie, if there is anything you want to complete your dinner, you only have to send up to the house, and get it."

"Yea, yes, Mass Fred, I know my privilege; but thanks to you and my own industry, I has everything I want. I'll be bound, I'll give you a dinner that you needn't be ashamed to ax that northern lady to set down to, and without sendin' to the heuse for anything either."

"I have no fear but you'll give us a first rate dinner, Aunt Susie."

"Well, I guess you needn't. I've cooked too many grand dinners for company, in old master's time, not to know what a dinner ought to be."

"That is true; for the house was always filled with company during the life-time of my parents, and that is why it seems so lonely now."

"Not now, Mass Fred, I's shure there's company enough in the house, now."

"True, there is company in the house, but my dear mother is not there, and my heart is lonely."

"Lawa, honey sposen you git married, then you won't feel so."

"No, Aunt Susie, I'll never get married."

"Laws, Mass Fred, don't talk so nonsense; sposen you and Miss Eulalie make a match."

"Or Miss Selden."

"Well, honey, make your own choice; but, I know, if I was to choose for you, I'd take Miss Eulalie. You know, she was your dear mother's god-daughter, and how fond she was of her, when she was a child."

"I know it, and I love her as truly as if she were my sister."

"And a little better, may be," said Aunt Susie significantly.

"No, only as well."

"We'll see."

"I must not sit here talking any longer. I promised Miss Selden I would ride over the plantation with her to-day, so I must away."

Aunt Susie, looking after him, as he moved toward the family mansion, soliloquized something after the following manner :

"Well, now, I do wonder if Mass Fred has a notion for that Miss Selden. Well, I should have thought he would have wanted a wife more like his mother : he was so fond of his mother ; but goodness knows, I don't b'lieve Miss Selden's a bit like my dear missus, what's now an angel of glory. But that's what comes of going to furrin parts. If he'd stayed at home, he'd never a seen her, and then, in course, he'd never a taken a notion to her. Well, well, what is to be will be, so it's no use a frettin."

While repeating this piece of sound philosophy, Aunt Susie turned, and went into the house, to make arrangements for her proposed dinner party; and never did senator's wife, who had sent out cards for a large party, feel more anxious that everything should go off in the most perfect order, than Aunt Susie was that the arrangements of her dinner party should be faultless. The first thing she did, she went to her chest, to overlook her table linen, and see if it had not lost its snowy whiteness by lying so long unused. Taking from the bottom of the chest a beautiful damask table cloth, and half dozen napkins, a gift from her mistress, therefore much prized, she examined them carefully; and, being satisfied that an extra washing could not make it

whiter, she laid it back again, and went to look over some crockery, which had also been a present from the same hand, and which was only used when Mass Fred dined with her. But we will leave Aunt Susie to make her preparations, whilst we accompany Frederick and Miss Selden in their morning's ride.

When Frederick returned to the house, Jim, the groom, had the horses in readiness, and Miss Selden was standing on the piazza, whip in hand, already habited for a ride. Having lifted her into the saddle, with a grace becoming a knight in the days of chivalry, he sprang upon his own steed, saying :

" Whither away ?"

" To the quarter, of course. I have heard, and read so much of the slave quarters on the Southern plantations, that I am dying with curiosity to see one."

" Well, by taking a ride of a few minutes, that curiosity may be satisfied, and, if you choose, we will alight and visit the cabins."

" Certainly, I wish to visit the cabins, for I could learn nothing of the condition of those who inhabit them, by merely looking at them, as I rode past."

Jim had already opened the gate of the avenue leading to the quarter, and, in a moment, Frederick and Miss Selden were cantering toward the dwellings of the slaves. When they were in the vicinity, Mary expressed great surprise, that she perceived none of the marks of that squalid wretchedness which she had been taught to believe pervaded these localities. In her imaginary pictures of southern life, she had been accustomed to place in the foreground, the splendid family mansion, with its gay parterres, through the flower bordered walks of which, in the twilight hour, when the air was laden with the rich perfume of the jasmin and orange flower, might be seen promenading the noble cavalier and bright belle, whilst from the stately drawing room gushes of music and mirth floated out on the quiet air, adding to the exquisite sense of enjoyment that pervades the being at this dreamy hour. After dwelling on this scene of beauty, how dark the shadow that rested on the picture in the back ground, where were clustered together the miserable hovels ; where, when the daily task was done, the toil-worn

slave crept, and stretched himself upon a bunch of straw to rest his weary limbs, and forget for a time the hardness of his lot! This was the picture she had often dwelt on in imagination, until her heart grew sad in her bosom, and a tear drop glistened in her eye. But how unlike the reality! Instead of the wretched hovels she had pictured, she beheld neatly whitewashed dwellings dotting each side of the avenue, presenting the appearance of a village of cottages. In front of each was a plat of ground carefully cultivated, whilst beneath the shade trees she saw troops of children gamboling, and amusing themselves with merry antics. When she had been there a few weeks, she learned their manner of spending the evening hour was as unlike what she had pictured as were their dwellings. Instead of creeping to a miserable pallet, as she had fancied, with a feeling of sullen discontent tugging at their hearts to seek the forgetfulness of sleep, they would collect in groups beneath the soft moonlight, whilst the joyousness of their hearts, and their freedom from care and anxiety, was manifested by the quaint and merry songs poured forth in voices of deep, rich melody, whilst the soft tones of the banjo, in the hands of some skilful performer, forms a fine accompaniment. Or the plantation musician brings forth his fiddle, and gay groups of dancers trip the light fantastic toe to his strains of music, with as much zest, if not with as much grace, as the beautiful belle who glides languishingly through the polka or quadrille in a brilliantly lighted dancing saloon.

When Miss Selden had looked for some time on this scene, Frederick called one of the children to hold the horses whilst they would alight and enter some of the cabins, that she might see the interior as well as the exterior. She was as much surprised with the comfort of their dwellings within, as she had been with their outward appearance, and she could but note the respectful affection with which those who were considered too old for field labor, received the salutation of their master. Having visited several of the cabins, they again mounted their horses, and went on to the sugar house, that Miss Selden might witness the process by which the saccharine matter was extracted from the cane and converted into sugar. Here again she could but

observe the cheerful alacrity with which they performed their labor, whilst their looks of perfect content was an indication of their freedom from care. When she had satisfied her curiosity, by looking on this scene for some time, they returned home.

To Eulalie's inquiry as to her impressions of slavery after having visited them in their dwellings, and seen them at their work, she replied :

" Their condition, in reality, is as unlike what I had imagined it, as day is to night. If the countenance be an index of the heart, they are a very happy set of people. But I suppose there are not many plantations where the slaves are so comfortably situated as they are on this."

" I think you may take this as a fair criterion by which to judge of other plantations. True, you will sometimes find a hard, cruel master, who treats his slaves harshly ; but such a man is never respected by his neighbors : he is generally considered an unfit associate for gentlemen. But, however, I trust you will have an opportunity of visiting other plantations, and drawing your own conclusions before you return to Illinois."

When Mary returned to her room that night, and thought over the events of the day, she could but admit, if what she had seen was a fair sample of the condition of the slave, the horrors of slavery had been greatly exaggerated and overdrawn. However, we will not stop to give her reflections on the subject at this time.

The next day, at the appointed hour, Fred and his friends were at Aunt Susie's to partake of the dinner prepared for them, and soon they were seated at a table upon which was placed a dinner that would satisfy the most fastidious epicure, for Susie had held the situation of principal cook in her master's household so long, that she knew how to serve a dinner in the most perfect manner, and it was the greatest pleasure of her existence to have Master Fred occasionally to partake of dinner beneath her own roof. After the dinner had been partaken of, and much praise bestowed upon it, her guests departed. Miss Selden having thus made the acquaintance of Aunt Susie, was afterwards a frequent visitor at her cabin ; and by this means she learned more truly

the feeling of undying attachment that a faithful slave entertains for his master and family, than she otherwise could have done—an attachment that would cause them to sacrifice their existence, if necessary, to promote the interest of a family upon whose domain they were born, and many members of which they have carried in their arms in the helpless period of infancy. We could record many instances of this beautiful devotion that have occurred where misfortunes have fallen upon families of wealth; but as they have no connection with the incidents of our story, they would be out of place here.

CHAPTER XXX.

LIFE IN THE SOUTH.

ONE of those soft autumnal days, that fills the soul with delicious dreamy musings, has just passed. The last rays of the setting sun gild flower and tree. And the gentle breezes sweep past murmuringly, as if sighing for the departure of the bright summer, and the fading of the beautiful flowers, her lovely children. Ever, at this season and this hour, did the thoughts of Frederick Leroux turn to his mother, for often had she, on such an eve as this, spoken to him, when but a child, of the mutability of earthly pleasures, and the imperishable joys of heaven. He had been seated sometime alone in his own room, with his head resting upon his hand, and sad memories swelling his bosom, although the house was full of gay company. At length, he roused himself from the mournful reverie, and said, as if addressing that dear parent:

"Ah, yes, my mother, already have I tested the truth of your teaching. The bright dream of happiness that shed so warm a glow on my existence, is already darkened forever, leaving me with an aching heart for which earth has no solace. But now, oh my mother, I thank thee for thy early teaching. It enables me, when the memory of earthly sorrow would crush my heart, to turn my thoughts heavenward, and it seems my spirit is permitted to hold intercourse with yourself, and my pure and beautiful Ella, until I fancy you are actually present with me. And may it not be that such is the case."

How long he would have remained in his room, forgetful of all save the spirits with whom he seemed to be holding inter-

course, we know not, but a rap was heard at his door, and he had scarcely uttered the word "come in" before his faithful old nurse stood beside him.

"What is wanted, mammy?" said he, rather abstractedly.

"Why, mercy on us, Master Fred, you are wanted to be sure. Here you sit moping in your own room, when you ought to be in the drawing-room. The ladies will soon be ready for the ball, and you ought to be there to 'scort 'em to the dancin'-room."

"I'll be there in time, don't be uneasy, you know it takes young ladies a long time to decorate their pretty persons for a ball."

"I declar, Master Fred, it looks like old times, but 'deed it has been so long since there has been company in the house; seems to me, they've all forgot how to wait on 'em but Susie and me, so I must go and be seein' to things."

Saying this she bustled down to the kitchen to see how Aunt Susie was getting along. From thence to the dining-room to see if all was in proper order there, and to give her final orders to each house-servant, cautioning them to not disgrace their raising by their awkwardness. If sad thoughts thronged the bosom of the master, not so with the servants. If you would see the household-servants of a wealthy planter in all their pride and glory, it is when the house is full of grand company. Whilst the servants belonging to the establishment are all activity, you might see the dusky hand-maidens of the visitors—for a lady in the South when she visits a neighboring planter is always accompanied by her waiting-maid—flitting up and down the broad stair case, or from room to room, upon some errand for their mistresses. At length the fair ladies, one after another have completed their toilettes and descended to the drawing-room, till finally all are gone, and now their serving-women collect together on the piazza or passage, and each expatiates upon the elegance and beauty of her own young missus, and the sensation her appearance will produce among the young gentlemen present.

"Gals, did you see Miss Louise as she went to the drawin'-room after she was dressed; I tell you she looked magnificent," was the remark of the maid of Louise Picard.

"Laws, Chloe, you don't know what magnificent means, if you call little Miss Louise magnificent; why if you had such a young lady as I have, you might brag, now Miss Emilie is real splendid, why she is as grand as any queen."

"Tut, children, don't talk," remarked a third, "you ort jist to a seen Miss Lucy Marier, when I was done a dressin' her, then you'd a seen what elegance and beauty means. Pahaw! none of the other young ladies here can't hold a candle to her."

"Fiddlesticks," exclaimed a fourth, "jist listen to the consate of that nigger, as if Miss Francoise Antoinette, my young missus, did not outshine Miss Lucy Marier, as fur the moon outshines the stars."

The conversation was carried on in this strain, each contending her own young lady outvied all others. When the sound of music was heard in the dancing saloon, indicating that the ball had commenced, they too, soon separated—each glided off to find some unoccupied nook in the ball room, where she could ensconce herself, ostensibly for the purpose of waiting upon her young lady, but in reality to have the gratification of seeing their young mistresses move gracefully through the dance, and note the impression their elegance and beauty made upon the hearts of the young gentlemen who were present.

The evening sped merrily on, and as Frederick passed among his guests with graceful courteous manner, addressing some sprightly remark to each, none, who were unacquainted with his heart's history of the past year, would have guessed that a shadow had darkened the brightest dream of his life, so completely did he hide the desolated heart beneath a smiling face and courteous manner. At length supper was announced, and it was amusing to note the countenances of the waiting maids, and observe the approbation or disapprobation of each, as manifested by her countenance, with regard to the gentlemen who waited upon her young mistress to the supper table.

When Miss Selden entered the room where the supper was laid out in a style of elegant profusion exceeding anything she had ever witnessed, she observed Aunt Susie standing at one side of the room, surrounded by a troop of well trained assistants,

ready, at her bidding, to serve the company with the luxuries and delicacies she had provided.

The visitors were neighboring planters who had frequently partaken of the hospitality of Mr. and Mrs. Leroux during their life time; and the young ladies who now moved down the long dining room, in all the grace and pride of young womanhood, had frequently visited this mansion with their parents in their childhood, and they at once recognized Aunt Susie as the same old cook upon whom they had played many a mischievous prank in by-gone days, and each, as she or he passed, addressed some pleasant remark to her, such as :

"Why, auntie, you living yet?"

"Well, auntie, I see you have not forgotten how to get up a splendid supper."

One whom you would at once recognize, by the roguish glance of her eye, as a mischief loving witch, when she passed Aunt Susie, said :

"How do you do, auntie? have you forgotten the little torment that used to steal pies from you?"

Never did a queen derive greater gratification from the homage of her courtiers, than Aunt Susie derived from these friendly notices of the young ladies who were guests in her master's house.

At length, they were all seated at the supper table, and the glance of Aunt Susie's eye seemed to be sufficient to teach each one what to do. This was the first time Miss Selden had seen a large company entertained in the house of a planter; and when the supper was ended, and she had returned to the dancing saloon, she could not forbear expressing admiration at the excellent manner in which the supper had been served. She and young Collingwood were standing near a window looking on the gay scene, when sounds of merry laughter, proceeding from the hall where the servants were supping, fell on her ear. Turning to her companion, she said :

"I do not wonder that you Southrons can so easily persuade yourselves that your peculiar institution does no wrong to the negro, for any one who looked upon the dusky countenances of

the servants this evening, upon which sat looks of proud self importance as they moved about performing the light services required, would say they really enjoyed the ball as much as the revelers themselves. And then the manner in which every thing went off in the supper room. It seemed that a glance of Aunt Susie's eye or a motion of her hand, without a word from her lips, was sufficient to indicate to each what was to be done, and it was done without any confusion, or one running here, saying: 'What shall I do?' and another running there: 'What must I do?' No, all went on like clock work. Oh, I do not wonder the Southern people are hospitable, and fond of having their houses filled with company, for it gives them no trouble. Would you believe it, I have found myself thinking at least a dozen times to-night, that these slaves are much happier than the poorer classes in New York; and I have to keep calling to mind the great moral wrong that is committed by holding slaves, to keep alive the proper abhorrence of slavery in my bosom. Indeed, I am afraid, if I remain long in the South, I shall learn to look upon it with more leniency than is consistent with correct principles."

"I fear myself you are in danger of becoming less orthodox upon this subject, when your opinion of the condition of the slave is based upon your own observations, instead of the reading of fancy pictures of cruelty, portrayed by vivid imaginations, for the purpose of creating a prejudice against the owners of slaves. For, assuredly, such descriptions cannot have the least effect in bettering the condition of the slave for whom so much sympathy is expressed."

"Yet, you must admit the holding of slaves a great moral wrong."

"That is a question that it is useless to discuss; but if I correctly understand the matter, the object aimed at by those who most earnestly and conscientiously advocate the emancipation of the slave, is a desire to increase the happiness of a fellow being."

"Assuredly, that is the object, there can be no other."

"Well, some of our Southern people doubt the entire disinterestedness of many who clamor most vociferously for the

emancipation of the slave. But let that pass : it is a mere matter of opinion which cannot be demonstrated."

Just at this time, Frederick approached them, and, addressing Miss Selden, he said :

"What grave subject are you and my friend discussing? For it must be a grave one, judging from the expression of your countenance."

"It is a grave one : we were speaking of your peculiar institution."

"Dismiss such a *dark* subject from your thoughts, and come 'tread a measure' with me, keeping time to the strains of glad music, and at some other time, we will attend to this matter."

And Miss Selden, who was passionately fond of dancing, soon forgot the subject she had been discussing, and moved through the mazy dance, with the zest of a gay glad spirit. But as the happiest hours ever seem to pass the most fleetly, it was near morning, when the merry dancers retired to their sleeping apartments, some to sleep, and others to muse. It was late the next morning ere the guests assembled in the drawing room, but when they did shake off the influence of the drowsy god, they were all full of the spirit of enjoyment, and thus it continued during the week they remained ; and when the last guest had departed, Miss Selden declared she had never spent a happier week. To which Fred laughingly replied :

"I fear you will forget the mission for which you came to the south."

"I sometimes think of it."

"Suppose we call on Aunt Susie, this afternoon, and acquaint her with your kind dispositions in her favor?"

"I think it will not be of any use : she seems to be perfectly content with her present condition."

"It will be well enough to make the proposition of giving freedom to herself and family, and hear her opinions on the subject."

In the afternoon, Fred and Miss Selden visited the cabin of Aunt Susie. She was seated in the rustic porch, enjoying a nap, but the opening of the gate, which gave entrance into her garden,

awakened her; and when they approached, she begged them to come and sit down, and stay awhile, for she was downright lonesome since the company was all gone. Frederick told her they had come for the purpose of having a little chat with her.

When Frederick and Miss Selden left Aunt Susie's, he asked if she thought he was in danger of sustaining any great loss by complying with the promise he had made her. "I do not pretend," said he, "to bring an argument to prove the moral justice of one human being holding another in bondage; but I do insist that the slave, on the southern plantation, is far more comfortable, and happier than hundreds of the poorer classes in the northern cities; and if slavery were abolished in the southern states, instantaneously, it would greatly increase the amount of human suffering. Those who urge most vehemently the abolition of slavery are totally ignorant of the relations and feelings that exist between master and slave. From custom, we have become dependent on each other, and in a manner necessary to each other's well being and happiness. The slave needs the master to manage, arrange and provide for him, and the master needs the slave to labor; for, being unaccustomed to it, he is unfitted for severe bodily exertion, whilst, at the same time, the slave is equally unfit, from his habit of dependence on his master to supply his wants, to exercise that calculation and forethought, which is necessary to secure permanent prosperity. I think even you, Miss Selden, must admit that the slave, on the southern plantation, is happier than the miserably poor, of whom there is a large class in the northern cities."

"'Tis true, and I was forcibly impressed with its truth a few evenings since. Several of us were taking a moonlight stroll to enjoy the beauty of the evening. We were walking down the avenue not far from the dwellings of the slaves, when our steps were arrested by the sound of music that was borne to our ears upon the breeze. It proceeded from a group of the merry-hearted creatures. It seemed an outburst of joyousness from spirits free from care. For none but glad hearts send forth such melody. They were sitting in front of their cabins enjoying the sweet breath of evening, and I involuntarily contrasted their own

dition with thousands of the overtasked spirit-crushed poor of New York, from whose lips no song of joy is ever heard. When they do give expression to their feelings in music, it is breathed forth in low sad tones, resembling the wail of an overburdened spirit, sighing for a release from care. But, the songs to which we listened on that evening, seemed the overflowing of hearts untouched by sorrow. They who give expression to such music cannot be unhappy."

"They are not, and if persons who expend so much unnecessary sympathy upon those who do not need it, would search out and relieve those who do need it in their own vicinity, they would not have so much surplus sympathy for those beyond their influence, and the amount of human suffering would be much lessened. Then, there would be more of true charity, and less of sounding words."

Miss Selden could but admit the truth of Frederick's remarks, which she felt was based upon sound reasoning.

CHAPTER XXXI.

A FASHIONABLE WATERING PLACE.

THE servant, whose duty it was, to go daily to the nearest post office and bring the mail, has just returned, bringing a package of letters and papers, which he deposits on the centre table in the drawing-room, where were assembled the pleasant circle, who were now making the family mansion of Frederic Leroux so homelike. Annie stepped to the table to see if there was anything addressed to her, and the first thing that met her eye was a letter from her mother. Having broken the seal and glanced at its contents, she turned to Miss Selden, who was seated at a distant window so much interested in a conversation with Francis Collingwood, that she had not observed the arrival of the mail, saying:

"A letter from my mother, and she commands our immediate departure for Washington, as winter is just at hand."

To which Mary replied:

"Much as I have desired to visit Washington, to look upon our great statesmen, and listen to their thrilling eloquence, I now feel that I could linger in this sunny clime forever, forgetful, alike, that there is such a season as winter, and of Washington celebrities."

Looking into her face, Collingwood said, in an undertone, but in a voice indicating deep feeling:

"When we lose your society, the sunshine of our social circle will be dimmed, and one heart, at least, will feel the chill of winter."

This remark was heard by none but Mary, but it suffused her cheek with a rich glow, as she rose, saying :

"I must see what news the mail brings for me."

Looking over the letters, she found but one addressed to her. Taking it in her hand, she retired to her own room, but, she did not immediately break the seal, although she recognized the writing of her mischief loving sister, Effie, who detailed to her, weekly, the news and gossip of the village. She threw herself into a chair, and leaning her head upon her hand, she gave way to a fit of musing.—The look and tone of Collingwood, convinced her that he loved her ; "and I," said she, communing with herself, "who have ever laughed at love as a notion, a whim, a caprice, must admit that this noble Southron has made an impression on my heart that time will never efface."

The word noble might well be applied to Francis Collingwood, and none who looked upon his fine form or intellectual brow, and felt the influence of his graceful manners, but would be convinced, that, in his bosom beat a noble heart. And the manner in which he bore the loss of his property was an evidence of his true nobility of soul.

His father, who was a wealthy planter, died when he was a mere boy, leaving him to the guardianship of the husband of an only sister, who had been married but a few months.—Henry Watson might be said to be, comparatively, a stranger to Mr. Collingwood, at the time of his death, although the husband of his daughter. She had met him at Saratoga, whilst spending a few months there with a party of friends, unaccompanied by her father, the summer previous to her marriage.—Carrie Collingwood was amiable, accomplished, beautiful. This, of itself, would have drawn around her crowds of admirers at this grand "depot" of fashionable pleasure seekers, but one of her friends told, as a great secret, to a gentleman, who was expressing his admiration of her artless unassuming manners, that she was an heiress worth a hundred and fifty thousand dollars. This, as is usually the case with secrets at those places, was soon known to every one who took an interest in such a secret, rendering her an object of great attraction to that class of adventurers, who

usually frequent the various watering places during the gay season, with the expectation of making a grand matrimonial speculation, although the only capital they have to go upon, is a fine person, and a liberal supply of those external graces and accomplishments which are regarded with more favor by young ladies visiting those places, than the sterling qualities of heart and mind.

Henry Watson belonged to this class, and no sooner had he heard that Miss Collingwood was an heiress, than he devoted himself to her exclusively. He sang, danced, and waltzed, to use the language of sentimental young ladies, "divinely." He possessed fine conversational powers, quoted poetry exquisitely, and talked sentiment by moonlight in a voice that fell on the ear in musical tones. If Miss Collingwood played on the piano, he stood beside her, and turned over the music; when she sang, the rich deep music of his voice frequently mingled with her bird-like notes; if her tiny feet kept time to merry strains of music, he was her partner in the dance; or, did she find the heat of the ball room oppressive, he it was who conducted her to the balcony, that the bland breath of evening might fan her brow. Nurtured by such influences, and surrounded by such scenes, love is of rapid growth.—Wonder not, then, that the heart of Carrie Collingwood, ere she left Saratoga, had poured out the wealth of its pure affections on Henry Watson, and when he asked her permission to visit her in her southern home, and ask her of her father, it was granted.

It is the evening before her departure. The murmur of voices is heard on the balcony, and we recognize the voice of Henry Watson, as we catch the following words:

"And, darling, you have never inquired whether my wealth and position are such as would entitle me to sue for the hand of the peerless Miss Collingwood."

"To do so, would imply a suspiciousness foreign to my nature."

"It is that confiding ingenuousness, which makes you so dear to me; yet, I would say to you ere we part, that the money I have invested in various stocks, will render us independent during life."

"Speak not of worldly goods, it was the refined and elevated purity of your sentiments, that won my heart. Were you penniless, you would be equally dear to me; and my kind father loves his orphan daughter so doatingly, that he would ask nothing in the man who would wed her, but the possession of those qualities, which would secure her happiness."

The conversation continued in that sentimental strain, which is exceedingly interesting to lovers, but not possessing much interest to any one else, therefore we will not repeat it. We have given this much, to show that it was this first step in falsehood and dissimulation that induced him afterwards, when, by the death of his father-in-law, he had it in his power to rob the brother of his wife. .

Ere the first snows of winter had whitened the hills of Massachusetts, his native State, Henry Watson had followed Carrie Collingwood to her elegantly appointed and luxurious home.

Plausible and scheming, he soon won the confidence of Mr. Collingwood as completely as he had fascinated the heart of his daughter; and when the father died, a few months after, he became the husband of the daughter. A will was made, dividing the property equally between his son and daughter, and naming Henry Watson as guardian of his son, and sole executor of his last will and testament.

Then it was the thought entered his mind, of making himself sole owner of this estate. He told his gentle and confiding wife that the property was encumbered with heavy debts, and he would be obliged to use his own means to release it. She believed his specious tale. But when her brother had completed his education, and attained the age that he was recognized by law as capable of transacting his own business, he asked of his brother-in-law a settlement. He told him the same story. Young Collingwood doubted its truth, but rather than distress his sister by judicial proceedings, which, he was well assured, would prove her husband—whom she believed to be the perfection of all that was noble and good—a consummate knave, he acceded to the proposition of Watson, which was to take a small sum in money, which he would pay him immediately, and give in return a re-

ceipt, acknowledging this as his portion of the estate of his father. Francis Collingwood had never regretted securing the happiness of his almost idolized sister, by the sacrifice of his property, until now, when he felt that he loved Mary Selden truly, devotedly, yet could not ask her to unite her destiny to his, on account of the humbleness of his fortune.

When Frederick, who had been absent during the day, came in at the dinner hour, Annie said to him, in a gay mood :

"Look, ye, cousin mine, I have, this morning, received a positive command from my mother to return to Washington; so, you, notwithstanding your determination to be no longer a loiterer in the saloons of fashion, will have to accompany Mary and myself, and, as a matter of course, spend the ensuing winter in the Metropolis of the nation."

"Not so, my pretty coz, I will no longer be a wanderer from the home of my childhood : I have tested the pleasures of Washington life. You and Miss Selden," said he, bowing to Mary, "must accept the escort of my friend Collingwood. I have no doubt, as he has never visited that city, but he will enjoy one season in mingling in its gay society."

"I will indeed be but too happy to spend a winter there, if the ladies' will but accept of me as an escort to see them safe home," answered Collingwood.

It was immediately determined that Collingwood should go with them, and they would take their departure in a few days. The time of leave taking soon arrived, and those who remained uttered their adieus with many regrets. But Francis Collingwood was inexpressibly happy. Their journey, which was very pleasant, was performed in a few days; but the change in the climate which the few days brought them was very striking. When they left their friends in Louisiana, the air was bland as the breath of spring, and as they sat in the drawing room, the perfume of flowers was borne upon the breeze, filling it with fragrance; but here, every thing wore the aspect of winter, the atmosphere was chill, and it required a blazing fire to render the rooms comfortable.

Annie arrived at home but a few days previous to her birth-

day, and Mrs. Grayson was anxious to celebrate it with her usual ostentation and pomp. Not that she loved her daughter so much, for her heart was too much engrossed with fashionable display to possess in any great degree so pure a feeling as maternal love; but these occasions gave opportunity to those sycophantic flatterers who ever flutter round those occupying high positions in the fashionable circles of Washington, to pay her compliments on the exceeding youthfulness of her appearance. As she grew older, she seemed to seek with greater avidity the unmeaning compliments of the heartless votaries of fashion. But this is the natural consequence of a life devoted to the vanities of the world; all taste for the true and the rational is destroyed. Had Annie consulted her own feelings, she would have preferred spending the evening in her own room; but she always yielded her wishes to those of her mother, when she could do so without violating any moral or religious principle; and preparations for a brilliant party were made. Mary Selden was in ecstasy at the prospect of being introduced into Washington society under such favorable auspices; and whilst she and Mrs. Grayson were in a fever of excitement, shopping, visiting milliners and dress-makers in order to be in readiness for the winter gayeties, Annie was calling upon her humble acquaintances to learn how they were prepared to meet the frowns of winter. She found most of them occupying the same houses in which she had taken leave of them when she left the city. But it was with regret she learned, when she called at the house formerly occupied by Mrs. Carlton, that she had removed; and what caused her considerable anxiety was she could not learn to what part of the city they had removed. But it is ever thus in cities: the unfortunate are lost sight of, whilst every act of the prosperous and wealthy is chronicled, as if their slightest movements were of vast importance to the world. This is life—this is human nature.

CHAPTER XXXII.

LIFE'S CONTRASTS.

THE birth-night of Annie arrives. It is one of those chill December evenings, when the winds howl dismally around the household eaves, and the storm-clouds lower darkly in the atmosphere. But what matters it to the gay revelers beneath the roof of Mr. Grayson! All is light, warmth and happiness there. This is the first large party of the season, and all seem to enjoy it the more from that very circumstance. In music, dancing and conversation the evening wore on. Annie's amiability caused her to exert herself to seem interested and delighted at this reunion with her city friends, after her long absence. Although she danced to merry strains of music, and listened with a smile to the conversation of her gay young friends, yet, if you observed her closely, her eye, that true index of the soul, revealed that the heart was not interested. Even whilst light words lingered on her lips, and a smile sat upon her brow, her thoughts went back to her preceding birth-day, and her soul was full of the memory of that cherished friend of her childhood who entered the drawing room, on that evening, with a heart overflowing with bright hopes and glad anticipations, but left it ere the midnight hour with a spirit so crushed and broken, that the only balm which could heal it was a release from the earthly tenement that encased it. There was also another friend unforgotten by her on that festive evening. Just before the gay throng had dispersed, she, with some other friends, had strolled into the music room: her hand rested upon her harp, and her thoughts were of Emma Carlton. A sweet young girl, who was just scanning the first pages of life,

which to her young vision seemed all sentiment, music and romance, approached her, saying :

"You are so absorbed, Miss Grayson, I presume you are invoking the Muses."

"No, Alice," said she, pushing back the golden curls from the sunny brow of the young maiden, "I was thinking of one to whom the Muses vouchsafed their inspiration, whenever she turned to them. I wish I knew how, and where she is to-night."

"Who is it?"

"Emma Carlton. I have not been able to find her since I came from the South. Two years ago this night, she was one of the gladdest, gayest spirits who came to congratulate me on the anniversary of my natal day. Since then, misfortune has fallen on her, and she no longer mingles with the gay throng, but devotes her days, and even portions of her nights, to constant toil, that she may assist her mother in supporting herself and a little sister."

"I remember her at school, when I was a little girl; she was finishing her education, and she used to sing songs for me."

"Her kind heart made her fond of amusing the little girls in that way."

"Yes, and she said, she loved to sing for me, because my very spirit seemed to drink in the music. I remember a little impromptu song she once sang for me, which pleased me so much, that I begged a copy of it, and I often sing it now. I have often thought of her, but never happened to meet her since she left school."

"No, for her fortunes have changed, and she no longer moves in that society to which she was an ornament."

"I would dearly love to meet her again, and hear her sing."

"And I too, but Alice, sing for me the little song you referred to."

Alice C. drew the harp to her, and playing a sweet prelude that hushed the hum of voices in the room, she sang the following :

Come golden haired one, sit beside me,
And let me gaze upon thy face,
That I may watch each changing feeling,
Which on thy brow doth leave its trace.

Whene'er I sing a merry stanza,
 Thy violet eyes with glad thoughts gleam;
 Earth seems to thee, then, full of beauty,
 And life a bright unclouded dream.

And when low strains of mournful music,
 Fall gently on thy listening ear;
 Their fair lids droop, and on their lashes
 Is seen the diamond glistening tear.

And thus is life, 'tis sometime gleaming
 With joys that seem almost of Heaven;
 Again we deem each glad emotion,
 Is ever from our sad hearts driven.

But I would ask for thee, my bright one,
 That sorrow ne'er may cloud thy brow;
 That thou may'st ever be as joyous,
 With hopes as bright as crown thee now.

But, if cares should gather round thee,
 Whilst passing o'er life's weary way,
 Then turn to Him, who ne'er forsaketh,
 The trusting heart in grief's dark day.

But let us pass from the splendid mansion of the honored Senator, with its luxurious appointments, and the gay throng who are assembled, to the humble abode of the poor widow, and look upon the picture, which there presents itself. The room is small and the furniture scant. Beside the fire, which has burned low, sits a middle-aged woman, whose features bear the impress of calm resignation and hopeless suffering. Upon a little cot lies a child of rare loveliness; beside her stands a young girl of matured beauty. True nobility is stamped upon her brow. The sad expression of her dark eye indicates painful thought. The child, although asleep, tosses restlessly upon her couch, for she is parched with fever. The watcher bends over the sleeper, who murmurs seemingly with indistinctness:

"Do not feel so badly, sister Emma, I do not want it much, not so very much."

"Poor suffering one," said the young girl, moving towards her mother, seated near the fireplace, "it is almost more than I can bear."

"We are sorely tried," remarked the mother in a voice of

such touching sadness that it vibrated painfully on the over-charged heart of the girl.

"Oh," said she with unusual bitterness, "did the wealthy but know what we suffer by a deferred payment of the trifle we earn, they would always give it to us when the work is completed."

"True, darling, but they who have plenty, never think of the wants of the poor."

We presume the reader has recognized Emma Carlton, and we will take up her fortunes where we last left her. She had then been obliged by sickness, to dispose of everything in their possession save what was actually necessary, leaving nothing for comfort. And from the same cause, she had lost those customers, who usually gave her employment. Therefore, when she had secured an humble apartment at a cheap rent, to shelter them during the winter, her next thought was to procure the means of earning a support. Knowing that at this season of the year, the hotels were filled with strange ladies, who required the services of a mantua-maker, she called upon the housekeeper at one of the hotels, asking her if she knew whether there were any ladies in the house who wished to employ a seamstress. The housekeeper told her she would show her into some of their rooms, and she could make the inquiry herself. The occupant of the first room she entered was a wealthy heiress from New York, who had come to Washington, to spend her father's dimes and display her own charms in Metropolitan society. There were two or three other ladies in the room, but Emma addressed herself to Miss Keldon, asking her, if she needed the services of a seamstress, stating her wish to procure employment.

"I do want work done," said the lady, staring at her with a supercilious air, "but you are a stranger to me, and how do I know if I give you work, but you may take it home with you, and I might never see you again. I have no faith in people who run round looking for work. It looks suspicious."

The quick blood mounted to Emma's brow, and an indignant glance, involuntarily flashed from her eye, but she replied with a quiet dignity.

"Such a thought had not presented itself to my mind, and

even if it had, I should have hoped my appearance would not have impressed ladies so unfavorably as to call up such an impression with regard to myself," and rising from her seat, she added, "I beg pardon for my intrusion," and turned to leave the room.

Mrs. Wainright, a Southern lady, who was in Miss Keldon's room, rose from her seat at the same time, and as Emma laid her hand upon the latch, she said to her:

"Accompany me to my room, I have need of your services."

Emma thanked her gracefully for her kind opinion, and followed her to her room. Mrs. Wainright gave her two dresses to make, with some directions as to the manner in which she wished the work done, and before Emma left the room, that lady was convinced she was refined and educated, and had moved in a different sphere from that which she now occupied. When Mrs. Wainright dismissed her, she remarked, that if the work suited her, she and her friends would give her constant employment, to which remark Emma replied:

"Then I am sure I shall not have to look elsewhere for work, for your manner assures me you are one who can be suited with work, when it is properly done; but, such is not the case with all ladies."

The work was finished and taken to her employer in a short time; it was approved of, the money paid for it, and more work given. When she returned home, she said to her mother:

"I now have a promise from a lady—not merely a female arrayed in elegant attire, mingling in fashionable society, therefore presumed to be a lady, but one possessing those graces of manner, and qualities of heart and soul, that constitute the true lady, let her be found in what sphere of life she may—one who will regard her promise to a poor sewing girl as sacredly as she would to the highest functionary in government; and she promises me that she will procure for me as much work as we can do. Now, I am assured if the winter is not a severe one, and we have no more sickness, we can keep actual suffering from our door, notwithstanding we have not been able to lay by anything during the last summer."

The days passed hopefully by. Mrs. Carlton's health was soon so much improved, that she was able to give Emma some assistance. Mrs. Wainright, as she promised, kept her supplied with work; however, it required no effort, for all for whom she once made a dress were so much pleased with her exquisite taste, that they would afterwards employ no other.

The winter set in chill and stormy, requiring more fuel than she had anticipated, and she found with her utmost exertions, she could barely keep pinching want from the door.

It is a few days before the grand birth-day party of the elegant Mrs. Grayson's, and the fashionable dress-makers are all overrun with work, so that it is impossible to get anything done at their shops. Miss Keldon has received an invitation to the party, and has purchased a superb dress for the occasion, but is unable to get it made, although she offers to give twice the usual price for the making of such a dress. All to whom she applies have promised as much as they can finish against that evening, and they cannot disappoint regular customers, and perhaps thereby lose them, for two or three dollars extra. In this dilemma, she calls upon Mrs. Wainright, and asked her if she thought her dress-maker, as she called Emma, would be able to make it. That lady told her she thought it probable she had the time, but she did not know whether she would do it.

"However," said she, "Miss Carlton will be here this afternoon to bring home some work she has completed for me, and I can speak to her about it."

"You will oblige me by doing so, and say to her I will pay twice the usual price for making a dress."

When Emma came, Mrs. Wainright, as she promised, spoke to her about making Miss Keldon's dress.

Emma replied she felt a reluctance in doing anything for her.

"But," urged Mrs. Wainright, "she will pay you double price."

"I could not conscientiously accept it," replied Emma. "It would be inconsistent with true principle, to take advantage of her exceeding desire to have it made to charge more than my usual price. I should lose my self respect, were I to do so."

However, I will compel myself to act in accordance with the teachings of Christianity, and make it for her at the usual price, notwithstanding my reluctance to do anything for her."

When Mrs. Wainright informed Miss Keldon that Emma would make the dress, she was in an ecstasy, and sent for Emma to come to her room immediately, that she might give her directions concerning its trimmings. When Emma had taken her measure and was about leaving, she asked how soon she could have it finished. She told her she thought she could, with her mother's assistance, make it in two days.

"You will oblige me very much if you can let me have it by three o'clock on Thursday evening."

"You shall have it against that hour."

The next day Emma called and fitted the dress, and told her she presumed it would be in readiness for her on Thursday morning. But when she returned home, she found Leila had, during her absence, been taken suddenly ill. Her face was flushed and her temples throbbing with fever. Although the child endeavored to suppress her complaining, that she might not hinder her sister, Emma's anxiety about her was so great, that she was constantly endeavoring to do something to give her relief; consequently, Miss Keldon's dress did not receive the finishing touch till six o'clock on Thursday afternoon, instead of three. When she took it home, she found Miss Keldon very angry and excited, and when she laid it before her, perfect in every flounce and fold, she said:

"It is strange that you sewing women think so little of your word. I have been in a perfect agony about my dress since three o'clock."

"I regret exceedingly that I should have caused you so much suffering, but it was unavoidable: my sister is very ill"

"Always some such excuse; I don't believe a word of it."

"It matters not; and if you will pay me my bill, I will annoy you no longer with my presence."

"I shall do no such thing; you made me wait for my dress, and now I will make you wait my pleasure for your pay."

These words fell painfully on Emma's heart, for she had pro-

missed Leila, who had during the day been craving an orange to moisten her parched tongue, that she would bring her one. Now, the poor child would be disappointed. When she got home, Leila reached out her hand eagerly, saying :

"Oh, give it to me! do, give it to me! I know it will make me almost well."

But when she was obliged to tell her she could not get it, and listen to her sad tones, as she said in changed accents : "Oh, I did want it so much!" she could not repress her tears, which the child observing, said :

"Do not mind it, sister Emma, I do not want it much, not so very much."

When Leila fell asleep and again murmured these words, it did, indeed, seem almost more than Emma could bear. Something like a feeling of despair crept about her heart, and she bowed her head upon her hands and wept bitterly. When she raised it, her eye fell on the little circlet of gold that Ella Stanmore had placed upon her finger just previous to her death. She remembered the words addressed to her by that friend when she placed it there, and the current of her thoughts was changed. The dark feeling of despair passed from her heart, and her thoughts were of the future, when the cares of life should have an end, and she would join that friend, who had passed from earth with the first great sorrow that fell on her pure young spirit. The struggles and privations of poverty were for a time forgotten, so completely was she absorbed in the contemplation of that rest which the Christian shall receive.

How beautiful, how simple, and yet how sublime, that one short sentence contained in the divine word, "Unto the poor the gospel is sent." And how many have realized its truth in life's trying hour. It spreads a joy, a calmness over the spirit, which the restless wordling can never know, even when surrounded by all that earth has to bestow. But Emma was soon recalled to earth, by a low moan from the sick child—she was beside her in a moment. Leila was awake, and to her inquiry of what she would have, she replied :

"Only a cup of cold water."

She put the cup to her lips, and when she had allayed her thirst, she looked into Emma's face with a smile, saying :

"What a blessed thing it is that God gives pure cold water to all without having to pay for it, for after all, there is nothing like it when you have a fever."

"Yes, darling, God is kind in bestowing not only that, but many other blessings which we often forget to feel thankful for, because they are so freely given."

She watched beside Leila, until she again slept, and then addressed her mother, saying :

"I have just been thinking, mother, I will to-morrow ask assistance of the wealthy Washington banker. I will not ask it as a charity, but as a loan. He has thousands in his coffers, and I will ask him to lend me fifty dollars without interest, until the return of summer, and then if we have health we can soon repay it."

"It will be useless for you to ask it, you will not receive it."

"Why, mother, we scarcely take up a paper, but we see some act of liberality recorded of him !"

"That is true, and I was told that the very day, the papers were lauding the kindness of his heart for bestowing a thousand dollars on some public charity, he sacrificed the property of a poor woman, who occupied a room belonging to him, because she owed him four dollars rent and could not pay him."

"I cannot believe such a story is true, it is gotten up by some one who envies him his good name as well as his wealth."

"I cannot vouch for its truth, it was told me. However, you may apply to him—if you get any assistance, I shall doubt its truth."

"I knew his daughter at school, and she was one of the most lovable children I ever saw ; her heart was overflowing with generous feeling. Her very presence would be a reproof to him if he were so heartless. No, no, I cannot believe his generous acts all proceed from ostentation, and that he gives away thousands merely for the purpose of eliciting a newspaper paragraph, at the same time he is oppressing a poor woman for the trifling amount of four dollars."

"I hope your opinion may be just, but I have experienced so much heartless selfishness that I have almost lost faith in human nature."

The conversation between Mrs. Carlton and her daughter, is an exemplification of life. Those who are upon its threshold, are ever hopeful, whilst those who have traveled long on its weary way, are disposed to be suspicious.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE BANKER.

EMMA CARLTON had not slept during the night. The weary watching and the struggles she had gone through to keep from her heart the feeling of despair ready to overwhelm her, caused her to look a shade paler than usual. The storm-clouds that had overshadowed the fair face of nature the preceding evening, had passed away, and a bright sunlight shed its glory over the bustling city, giving a look of cheerfulness, even in that apartment where sickness and want both were found.

It is near noon—Emma is standing beside her almost idolized sister, gazing fondly and sorrowfully upon her pale face. The flush of fever has passed from her cheek, and the labored respiration, that had caused her chest to heave almost convulsively during the night, has given place to natural gentle breathing, and she sleeps quietly. Emma turns from contemplating the sleeping child and addresses her mother:

“For Leila’s sake and thine, mother, I will humble myself to do that, which my spirit would otherwise recoil from, but I cannot see those I love suffer if I can by any means prevent it. I will now go and ask the loan of fifty dollars.”

“You will return as you go. What care the rich and prosperous for the claims of humanity?”

“Do not feel despondent, mother, for if the man of wealth, whose business it is to lend money, should refuse, then will I go to Annie Grayson, her heart and hand are ever open as day to the claims of humanity, yet to ask anything of her is like asking charity, because I know she would not suffer me to repay it.

Therefore, would I rather go to a stranger, then it will be business transaction, and my pride is not yet sufficiently humbled to enable me become the recipient of charity, unless it be to alleviate the suffering of those I love, and for whom I would sacrifice life."

When Emma had departed on her errand, Mrs. Carlton seated herself beside her sick child, and leaning her head upon her hand, she communed with herself in something like the following manner :

"How full of meaning is every passage contained in that book that exceedeth all human wisdom, and how bitterly have I realized the truth of that simple sentence which says, 'The sins of the parents shall be visited on the children,' for assuredly it was my eager participation in fashionable folly when in prosperity, and my wicked murmuring against the dispensations of a Divine Disposer of events when the first misfortune fell upon us, that has been the cause of the bitter trials through which my noble-souled Emma has had to pass. Such a discipline was necessary to bring me to a true knowledge of the pure gospel of Christ. Henceforth, the aspirations of my heart shall be, Oh God give a meek and lowly spirit, and an entire submission to Thy will."

We will leave Mrs. Carlton to her salutary reflections, and note the reception that awaits her daughter.

When she was ushered into the apartment, where sat the man of wealth and business, she felt a momentary embarrassment, but the picture of the suffering ones she had left at home, rose before her, and gave her courage to state her errand. She had just preferred her request, when his daughter, a glad young creature, who was the sunbeam of his heart, came bounding into the room; and, not observing any one was present, she skipped to his side, and laying one hand on his shoulder, she kissed his cheek, whilst with her other hand she drew from her pocket a handsomely netted purse, containing a few coins, saying :

"See, papa, the state of my finances. Have you ne'er a spare hundred dollars you can give me? I want to go a shopping."

"Yes, Alice, I have just that sum in my pocket; but that

young lady," said he, looking towards Emma, "has asked me to lend her the half of that amount; shall I oblige her or you?"

Alice cast her glance in the direction indicated by her father, and without making any reply, she sprang towards Emma, and seizing her hand, said:

"Why, Emma Carlton, is it you?"

Then, turning to her father, she presented her to him, as the dear young lady of whom he had often heard her speak, who had been so kind to her when she first went to school at Georgetown.

"Then I presume," said the father, "you are disposed to oblige her?"

"Yes, father, give it all to her, if she wishes it."

Emma declined receiving more than she had asked for, remarking, that if she had so large an amount in her possession, she might be tempted to expend more than she otherwise would, and it would be longer ere she would be able to repay it. Alice commenced protesting she should never pay it, but Emma stopped her, by saying:

"No, Alice, I must return it; were I to accept of it on any other condition, I should feel humiliated."

"As you please," replied Alice, placing in her hand fifty dollars; "but do not hurry yourself as to the time."

When Emma had received it, she rose to leave, but Alice begged her to remain till she could put on her cloak and bonnet, and then, as the carriage was at the door, she would set her down at home. She appreciated the genuine kindness of heart that prompted the offer, and did not hesitate to accept it. And in truth, when the anxiety of mind she had been laboring under was relieved, she was aware of physical weakness, and felt that she had scarcely sufficient strength to enable her to return home. She had to wait but a short time ere Alice returned cloaked and bonneted, saying:

"Now, Miss Carlton, I am ready;" and kissing her hand to her father, she left the room with the grace of a fairy.

The father's eyes followed her with love and admiration, and when she had vanished from his sight, he said aloud, although no one was present to hear him:

"That dear child is given me to keep alive in my heart kind and generous emotions, and to prevent me from holding on to my gold with a miser's grasp. It is to promote her happiness that I covet it, and if it gives her pleasure to assist the poor and suffering, why should I object to it?"

When the two young girls were seated in the carriage, and directions had been given the driver where he should take them, Alice gazed lovingly into Emma's face, saying:

"How well I remember your kindness to me at school, and the songs you used to sing for me. Do you love music as much as ever?"

"Yes, it has soothed many a sad hour since I saw you."

"Now, that I know where you are," said she, and her arm stole lovingly around Emma's waist, school girl like, "you shall not be sad any more, for I will visit you every week."

When she sat Emma down at her own door, she said:

"If you are determined to regard the trifle I gave you this morning in the light of a loan, mind that you do not give yourself any uneasiness about repaying it in a hurry."

After leaving Emma at home, she called on Annie Grayson, that she might have the pleasure of telling her where she would find the friend of whom she had spoken the preceding evening. When she called, she found the drawing room filled with visitors, for the wealthy and prosperous ever have hosts of friends. Ere she had left, she told Annie how and where she would find Emma.

Another chill wintry day has past. The darkness of night again envelops the city; but a flood of light, warmth and cheerfulness is diffused over the little room occupied by Mrs. Carlton and her children. Oh, ye, favored children of fortune, did ye but know how much suffering might be relieved by a judicious appropriation of a small portion of that wealth, which is not needed for your own comfort, you would more frequently make such appropriation for the relief of your fellow being.

Mrs. Carlton, in whose heart there is a feeling of hopefulness to which she has been a stranger for many a day, and for which she cannot account, sits beside Leila, as she sleeps sweetly, whilst

Emma and Annie Grayson are relating to each other the events of the past six months. Yes, reader, Annie Grayson, the bright belle of Washington society, has declined attending a brilliant party, at the house of a fashionable acquaintance, that she may spend the evening with Emma. But we will leave these two friends to talk over past events and future hopes, whilst we take a look into a brilliantly lighted drawing room of one of the fashionable hotels.

Several of the boarders, both ladies and gentlemen, have assembled there to pass the evening in elegant trifling. Among that number, we observe Miss Keldon, playing off many pretty fashionable affectations, in the hope of impressing favorably the heart of a distinguished foreign looking gentleman, who had just entered the room, and taken a seat a short distance from her. Turning, she said to him, with one of her sweetest smiles :

"Ah, Mr. Belmont," for it was our old acquaintance Charles Belmont, who had just returned from a visit to Europe, whom she was addressing, "how did you enjoy yourself at the party of last evening?"

"I enjoyed it much, for I met there many friends whom I had not before seen since my return."

"But I suppose after having been an honored guest of Dukes and Marquises, and having even been presented to royalty itself, one of our republican parties must seem very common and inferior."

"It did not so impress me. I return from my visit to Europe with my love for my own country, its government and institutions increased, also, my admiration of its fair daughters," added he, bowing to Miss Keldon.

The conversation now took that general chit chat form which is customary in the parlors of a hotel.

The dress and appearance of the ladies who had been present at the party at Mr. Grayson's was discussed and commented on. This was pronounced superb, that elegant, another in bad taste, and so on to the end of the chapter, until the dress of every lady who was considered sufficiently *distingue* to render her worthy of remark, save those who were now present, had been com-

mented on, either admired or disapproved. Mrs. Wainright, who was seated beside Miss Keldon, remarked to her :

"But I must compliment you upon the elegant trimming and exquisite fit of your dress. However, it seems to me that the correct taste of Emma Carlton gives a perfect finish to everything she touches."

When she concluded her remark, Charles Belmont bowed to her, saying :

"You mentioned the name of Emma Carlton. I had an acquaintance whom I esteemed very much, who bore that name ; it may be the same. Can you give me her address ?"

"I cannot, but presume she will be here to-morrow, and if you wish, I can learn it."

"You will oblige me much by so doing. She, of whom I speak, was once a star in Washington circles, but sorrow and misfortune fell upon her, and she was reduced to the necessity of supporting herself and mother by her own exertions. And nobly did she bear herself under her changed fortunes."

"Then it is assuredly the same, for although I have only known her as an humble seamstress, her language and manner indicate refinement and elegance."

Mr. Belmont did not remain long after his conversation with Mrs. Wainright, but retired to his own room to indulge in the agreeable thought of soon meeting Emma, and to determine that he would offer his heart and fortune for her acceptance.

Miss Keldon also retired early, but her reflections were anything but pleasant. She remembered her unjust and unlady-like treatment of Emma, and she feared it might become known to Mr. Belmont, and prejudice him against her.

The next morning, at as early an hour as it was possible to do so, without a violation of the rules of etiquette, Charles Belmont called on Miss Grayson. When the servant ushered him into the drawing-room, Annie was just placing in the hand of a boy a letter. After she had given him directions where to leave it, he asked if he should wait for an answer. She told him no answer was required, but he must deliver it as directed and re-

turn immediately. When the servant had left the room, Charles said :

"I called thus early to tell you I have heard of your friend, Miss Carlton, and think I shall soon be able to find her."

"I have been more fortunate, for I had the pleasure of seeing her last evening."

"How does she look? And how is she situated?"

"Fortune has not smiled on her. Poor Emma, she has been sorely tried since I last saw her."

Charles asked Annie to call with him to see her, as there was no friend in the city, in whom he took a greater interest. Annie was well aware of this, but thinking it might be quite as agreeable to him to call alone, she told him she would set him down at Mrs. Carlton's door; and, as she had other calls to make she would leave him there.

Emma was sitting at the window when the carriage drove up, and she recognized it at once as Mr. Grayson's; but when it stopped and a gentleman, whom she did not recognize, stepped from it, she was filled with surprise. She had risen from her seat to welcome her friend Annie at the door, but now, she awaited the gentleman's rap, ere she opened it. When she did so, and met the earnest gaze of her visitor, she exclaimed :

"Mr. Belmont! I was not aware you were in the city."

"I arrived but a few days since, and was not able to learn where you resided until this morning, or I should have called ere this."

Offering him a seat, she said

"I cannot sufficiently thank you for that disinterested kindness, which prompted you to search out, and call upon those, whom the circle in which you move, consider scarcely deserving the common civilities of life."

"Ah, did you know how much the future happiness of my life depended on you, you would not apply to me the word disinterested in seeking you out."

We will not give Emma's reply, but suffice it to say, that ere the return of Mrs. Carlton, who was out making a few purchases, Emma was the affianced bride of Charles Belmont. He had told

her, how, when beneath the bright skies of Italy, he had listened to the warblings of her dark-eyed daughters, it called up but the more vividly the remembrance of one, in his distant home, who had charmed his spirit with her sweet songs in his native tongue, and he felt that her voice must make the music of his life. And Emma in turn, admitted, that amid the trials that surrounded her, she had often thought of him, wishing heaven had given her such a brother, and then the world's cold neglect would be unregarded.

To Mrs. Carlton's look of surprise, when she entered the room and saw such a distinguished looking stranger seated beneath her humble roof, Emma said :

"Mother, I presume you remember Mr. Belmont?"

"I remember him well, but did not immediately recognize him."

She being seated, he told her of his wishes with regard to her daughter, and begged her to name an early day when he might claim her hand. As no costly trossseau was to be prepared, an early day was named. When he left Mrs. Carlton's he immediately proceeded to Mrs. Stanmore's, who was again keeping house in the city, having accompanied her son when he came to take his seat in Congress.

His salutation to that lady when he entered the parlor was :

"Congratulate me, Mrs. Stanmore ; I have found Emma Carlton, and she has consented to be mine."

"Then you have secured to yourself a prize. In her, the refinements and accomplishments of the true lady are united to the graces and virtues of the devoted Christian; and for perfect happiness in domestic life, it is necessary that a wife possess the Christian virtues. But when do you lead her to the altar?"

"A week from next Tuesday. I urged thus early a day, that I might at once place her in ease and comfort. And I have called, to beg you to add another to the many kindnesses you have already conferred on me."

"Name it, it shall be done."

"Permit me to bring my bride and her family here, when we return from church."

"I will be but too happy to have you do so, for I must admit I am somewhat lonely. Edwin is so much occupied, that he is often obliged to be absent of evenings, as well as during the day."

The bridal day at length arrives, and Charles Belmont, who, during the week, had bought a beautiful pair of horses and an elegant carriage, this morning asked Mrs. Wainright to honor him by taking a drive with him. Whilst they were out, he told her he was to be married to Emma Carlton, and asked her to accompany him to church at six o'clock in the evening, to witness the marriage ceremony, but, in the meantime, not to mention it in the house, as he did not wish to elicit any remark.

When the carriage again drew up at the door at six o'clock, and Mrs. Wainright and Charles Belmont, both attired with much elegance, stepped into it and drove off, it elicited considerable remark among the young ladies, and some of them of not the most amiable character.

"I do think," exclaimed Miss Keldon, petulantly, "that widows beat the Old Harry, to lead men by the nose. I suppose Mrs. Wainright thinks that carriage was bought for her particular accommodation. I always do despise to board in a house where there is a widow, for some how or other, they always contrive to monopolize the attention of the most eligible gentleman."

We will leave Miss Keldon and her companion to their gossiping remarks, whilst we go to the church, and see the fair young bride, simply robed in a dress of pure white muslin, with no ornament, save a sprig of orange blossoms. Beside her, as bride's maids, are Annie Grayson and Mary Selden, similarly attired; whilst beside the noble, manly form of Charles Belmont may be seen Edwin Stanmore and Francis Collingwood, as groomsmen. At a short distance, arrayed in her widow's weeds, kneels the mother, and beside her stands the soft eyed Leila. Mr. and Mrs. Grayson, Mrs. Stanmore and Mrs. Wainright are the only persons present, beside those we have named, to witness the marriage. When the ceremony was finished, the benediction given, and the bride had received the congratulations of her friends, Mrs. Stanmore insisted they should all accompany her

home, and partake of an entertainment she had prepared for the occasion. Her invitation was accepted, and soon the small but happy bridal party, were seated in her drawing room. So merrily passed the hours, that it was past twelve before the guests departed; and when Mrs. Wainright arrived at her hotel, Miss Keldon and her friends had retired, notwithstanding their anxiety to learn where she had spent the evening.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

NATIONAL HONOR AND NATIONAL JUSTICE.

It is about ten o'clock, the morning after Emma Carlton's marriage, and Miss Keldon is sitting alone in the drawing room, wondering why Mrs. Wainright and Charles Belmont had neither of them been at the breakfast table. She was not at all pleased with the appearance of things. She feared her speculations, with regard to the wealthy South American, for such she termed Charles Belmont, would not be realized. Whilst absorbed in these reflections, the servant ushered in a visitor. Upon looking up, she saw it was Miss Wilkie. The visit was intended for her. Although she had not been long in the city, she and Miss Wilkie had contracted a close intimacy; I will not say friendship, for it was not the love they had for one another that drew them together, but each thought to use the other to advance her own interest. Miss Wilkie, by her great power of reading the thoughts and motives of others, was fully aware of Miss Keldon's wishes, with regard to Charles Belmont, and the salutations of the morning were scarcely ended, when she said:

"Were you not surprised at the marriage of Charles Belmont, last evening?"

"Charles Belmont married!" exclaimed she, in a tone of surprise, and stretching her small gray eyes to their widest extent. "Impossible! you must be mistaken."

"No, I'm not mistaken; it is a truth."

"To Wainright, I suppose?"

"No."

"To whom, then?"

"Guess."

"Annie Grayson?"

"No; guess again."

"I never heard him speak of any other lady with admiration, so it is useless for me to guess again."

"I presume it is one of whom you would never dream, so I will keep you no longer in suspense. It is Emma Carlton."

"*Emma Carlton!* Oh, no; you are jesting."

"No, indeed, 'tis no joke."

"Well, that beats anything I ever heard of. A gentleman of his position and wealth to marry a dress maker! At this rate, there will soon be no such thing as distinctions in society."

"After all, there is nothing incongruous in this marriage: he commenced life as a farm hand somewhere in the west, and, you know, early associations can never be entirely eradicated."

"That is true. Now, I remember, I used sometimes to fancy there was something low and common about him."

"'Tis strange," said Mrs. Wainright, who had entered the room unobserved, "that as soon as a gentleman is married, ladies, who had before deemed him the *beau idéal* of all that was elegant and refined, suddenly discover in him a thousand imperfections."

"Well, there is one thing you must admit, it is rather awkward to be brought into social intercourse with your dressmaker. And I, for one, will not condescend to notice Mrs. Belmont as an equal, if she has married a man of wealth."

"That will not be policy," replied Miss Wilkie.

"Why so?"

"I have no doubt but she will be one of the brightest stars in the world of fashion during the winter."

"What! a poor seamstress a star in the world of fashion? Strange notions, you Washingtonians have."

"She is no longer the poor seamstress, but wife of a millionaire. I know Emma to be really gifted and accomplished, calculated to adorn any society; but, even were she one of the most ordinary of mortals, and bride of a man possessing so much wealth, she would be courted and caressed. Whereas, on the other hand, she might be possessed of all the gifts and graces, but, wanting

the charms of the *almighty dollar*, she would be unsought and uncared for. This is not only the case in Washington, but the world over."

"I cannot admit the truth of your assertion, for I know some families in New York, so exclusive, that mere wealth will not gain you admittance to their circles."

"Once in a while, such are met with, but these are exceptions to the general rule."

"Suppose you and I affect this exclusiveness; you are regarded as a bright star in the fashionable circles of the city, and if you refuse to meet her as an equal, it might induce others to treat her in the same manner."

"No, that would not answer. Three years since, Emma Carlton moved in the highest circles of this city, and was greatly admired. Misfortune came upon her, and she was forgotten. But now, fortune has smiled upon her, those who were the first to neglect her, will now pay her the greatest attention. I see you have not studied society as thoroughly as I have done."

"I would give half my fortune to be able to put this Emma Carlton down."

"Yet, it will not do to attempt it. And that the world may not guess at your disappointment, I would advise you to be among the first to offer her your congratulations."

The winter was an unusually gay one, and as Miss Wilkie predicted, Emma was one of the bright stars of the season. A few days after her marriage, as a matter of course, a party was given by the bridesmaids, which was gotten up in Mrs. Grayson's usual superb style. This was followed by others, all vying in brilliancy of display, and costliness of entertainment. But as all large parties are very similar, and we have heretofore described them, we will not tire our readers with a repetition.

Mary Selden, who, in the beginning of the season, entered with such zest into the pleasures and gayeties of the city, ere its close, became sated with its frivolity and heartlessness.

The following letter from her to her sister will give the reader an idea of her impressions of Washington society, its legislators, &c. :

DEAR EFFIE,

You reproach me with my want of punctuality in replying to your letters. I acknowledge you have just grounds for complaint, but could you conceive how completely I am occupied, you would excuse me. Pleasure is an exacting mistress when we give ourselves up to her dominion. She keeps the mind in a continual excitement, never allowing a moment to the sober, quiet duties of life. At least, that is the effect it has upon me.

To-day, feeling disposed to look upon the shadowy side of life, my thoughts turn from the gay scenes by which I am constantly surrounded, and I have withdrawn to my own room, determined to devote this day to writing to you, and the dear home friends. For, how much soever the imagination may be captivated by the gayeties of Washington life, when the heart wants rest, it is not in the halls of pleasure it finds it. After all, life's true pleasures are found in the performance of some kindly act to a fellow being, and in the domestic circle. We are happy in proportion to the happiness we confer on others. All else is a mere painted bubble, that vanishes as we grasp it. Methinks, I hear you exclaim, "What! our merry Moll moralizing!" I do feel in that mood to-day; but instead of indulging in it, I will reply to the inquiries contained in your last letter.

First, you ask me how our young Congressman stands among older members? He bids fair to win himself a name that will be second to none. Already, he is pointed out to strangers as "the talented young member." I can assure you, I am very proud to point him out as our representative, and I really believe I acquire some consequence from being intimately acquainted with him.

You next ask me, how I am impressed by the assembled wisdom of the nation as I look down from the gallery upon the halls of legislation?

There are many whose appearance wins from me involuntary respect, and I feel they are noble representatives of a free people; but there are some very *médiocres* specimens of humanity.

It is said here there is a great deal of bribery and corruption

in Congress. I do not know if there is any truth in such remarks.

Speaking of bills being passed by management and bribery, puts me in mind of saying to you, that our old schoolmates Clara and Minnie Moreland are here. Their father lives in splendid style, and they are much admired. I fancy I hear you exclaim, how is that possible, for, only three years since, when we left New York, he was perfectly bankrupt, not possessing a dollar to call his own. He is now here as agent—I do not know if that is precisely the term to apply to him. But I will define the position he occupies.

He is furnished with money by wealthy capitalists of the Eastern cities to live in this style, and, if deemed expedient, to give entertainments to members of Congress every day during the session. Thus, he becomes intimately acquainted with them, and learns how each may be influenced, in case those capitalists may wish to have some bill passed that will materially advance their interests. In truth, he may almost be said to keep open house.

You know it is not-etiquette to remain at the President's on the evening of the levees later than ten o'clock. On these evenings, there is an elegant supper prepared at the mansion of Mr. Moreland, and members of Congress who wish to prolong their evening's amusement, have a standing invitation to call and partake of his delicate viands and delicious wines. When the supper has been partaken of, and a few glasses of wine have produced an animated and genial flow of spirits, they return to the drawing room. Here his beautiful and accomplished daughters are prepared to entertain with soul entrancing music or sprightly conversation; and the spirit is either wrapped in dreamy Elysium by listening to songs of tender sentiment warbled by lips of beauty, or roused to boisterous mirth by sparkling repartee.

You unsophisticated dwellers on the plains of the West, with your simple tastes and notions, would deem this could have no effect on legislation. But it has. You should be awhile in Washington to judge of these things. When a bill is before the House where Mr. Moreland wishes to use his influence, no day

passes but he gives to some of the honorables a dinner party. And it is said that the fumes of wine so becloud the faculties of some, that they are sure to take his view of matters; and, although they make speeches by the week urging the necessity of economy in the expenditure of the public money, yet, as this particular measure will add to the national honor—which is more to be prized than national treasure,—it will not do to withhold appropriations to advance this particular project, even if it requires a million of dollars.

Now, no one is a greater advocate for sustaining the nation's honor than myself; but at the same time, I would not see national justice neglected. One of those memorials, petitions, or whatever it may be called, asking appropriations of large amounts of money for the encouragement of some splendid project, that is to add wonderfully to the national honor, and make immense fortunes for private individuals (but this latter clause is not inserted in the memorial), rarely fails to be urged through Congress. But let some poor old white-haired man, who gave his service to his country at a time when she was struggling for a national existence, and when she had no national honor, save brave hearts and true, ask for a claim of a few hundred dollars justly due him, and ten to one his request is neglected, and he is made to wait until in want and weariness of spirit, he breathes forth his last sigh; and all he receives from that country to whom the service of his manhood's prime, and the hard earned savings of his youthful labors were freely given in her hour of need, is the privilege of mouldering to dust beneath her sod.

"I will give you a case in point, I had it from our friend Annie Grayson, who seems to know all who need a friend. A poor old lady—I suppose according to the world's notion of things, I should not use the word lady in speaking of her, for she was both poor and uneducated. Well, I will say woman, for that is the nobler and more expressive word. A poor old woman, widow of a revolutionary soldier, who had died of wounds received in service, learned just before the close of the session a year or two since, that she was entitled to a pension. She enquired how she should get it. She was told to go to the Pension

Office. Upon going there, they told her, her papers were not just in order, but she would better put them before Congress, and they would fix it all right, and she could draw her money. Now she was in a difficulty. How was she, a poor lone woman, to get them before that august body. She was awed at the thought of approaching one of its members. A lady, who took an interest in her, presented her to a senator, who was chairman of the committee, before which her business would go. He was a very kind-hearted man, and he assured her, he would endeavor to have it acted upon speedily. She was delighted by the kindly manner with which she was received, and in the simplicity of her heart, thought, she would be able in a few days to get her money. Returning to her friends, she was eloquent in praising the condescension of this great man, who treated a poor old woman like her so kindly. Perfectly elated with her brilliant prospects, she exclaimed, 'Now won't I cut a swell; why I'll buy me a silk gown, when I get all that money.' This was two or three weeks before the close of the session. The last week came, and she was told it would be impossible to get her business through this session, but it should be attended to early the next. She was now as much depressed as she had been elated, and she said in a despondent tone, 'Ah, but I'm a very old woman, and I may die before next session, and then it will be of no use.'

"However, she lived until the commencement of the next session, and day after day, with her tottering feeble steps, she would walk from the Navy Yard to the Capitol—she was too poor to pay omnibus fare—to watch the progress of her bill. Finally, it passed the Senate and went to the House, and now her anxiety concerning it increased, for here she had no one to take any interest in it. Whilst watching for its passage in the Senate, she was sustained by a recognition, and words of encouragement from the Senator, to whom she had entrusted her papers. Still, when her strength would permit, she was in attendance at the Capitol. The last day of her watching, when the House adjourned, and she, with the crowd, issued from its marble portals, it was raining. She looked at the lowering clouds, there was no

probability of its ceasing, she must go to her home at the Navy Yard, and she had not the means of paying for a conveyance in an omnibus. Heart sick and weary she trudged sadly homeward, thinking her prospects were dark as the sky above her, and her briny tear-drops mingled with the falling rain. When she arrived at home, she was so overcome with fatigue that she could scarcely divest herself of her wet clothing. Usually, when weary, she would sit and rest herself by the wayside, but this she could not do when it was raining, consequently, her strength was completely exhausted. The next morning she was quite indisposed, she had taken a severe cold; her indisposition increased, and she never again left her room till she was carried forth a corpse. I tell Annie, our statesmen are so occupied with national honor, that they have no time to attend to national justice. But hark, the bell summons me to dinner, I will finish my letter when I return.

"Since returning from my dinner, I have read what I had written, and really it looks more like a chapter for a novel than a letter. However, I will send it, for it is only a leaf from real life in Washington. When I commenced writing, I intended to give you a description of some of the noted belles in the world of fashion, but my thoughts took a graver turn, and my letter is already strung out to such a length, that I must close by asking you to give my love to all the dear ones at home.

"Your loving sister,

"MOLLIE."

When Miss Selden had finished her letter, she arranged her toilet, and descended to the drawing-room, with a face unusually grave for her. Ere long, the door bell rang, and Francis Collingwood, accompanied by Edwin Stanmore, was announced.

Instead of meeting Edwin with some merry jest, as was her wont, she sat quiet and thoughtful, which he observing, said:

"What has caused so grave a mood, with our usually mirth-loving friend?"

"It is enough to cause any one, who loves his country, to wear a grave face, to note the course pursued by you great men of the nation."

"What, turned politician!"

"No, thank goodness, I was raised with a proper abhorrence of female politicians."

"Pray tell me what act of mine has caused your disapprobation?"

"Tis not you particularly, but the body of which you are a member."

"Give us the reason for your unfavorable opinion?"

"That I can do with a good will, for I just feel in the mood of doing so."

She then related the incidents of the old lady referred to in her letter. When she had concluded, Edwin said:

"Ah, had I known it in time, you may be assured I would have interested myself in her behalf."

"I always thought you had a kind heart."

"You may rest satisfied of one fact: my voice shall always be heard advocating the cause of the obscure and friendless, when I know they need a friend. The wealthy can always buy friends, in Congress halls, as well as private life."

"Yes, I am sure we have had proof enough of that, this winter—but let us talk of something else, I become indignant and excited when I speak of it."

The evening was spent in pleasant conversation, and Mary declared, when the gentlemen rose to depart, that she would not give one evening passed thus for all the parties of the season.

CHAPTER XXXV.

A NEW WILL DISCOVERED.

SUPPORTED by pillows, in a room furnished with all the appliances of wealth, may be seen a middle aged woman, in the last stage of consumption. Beside her is seated a fair young girl, reading from that book whose teaching smooths the rough passage to the grave. She had been reading some time, when the invalid looked up into her face, saying :

"Now, Jenny, close the book, I know you must be wearied. I fear I tax you too heavily."

"Nay, dear Aunt, it is a pleasure to do anything that will, in the slightest degree, alleviate your suffering."

"I know you are a kind, dear child, but to keep you beside me, night after night, when you might attend those parties and places of amusement, which the young enjoy so much, is a severe trial to your patience, and yet, you never suffer even a look of disappointment to cloud your face."

"Nor is it a disappointment. My early impressions and associations are such, that I do not desire to engage constantly in those gayeties, which ladies who have been brought up in the city deem so necessary to their happiness."

"Happiness !" said the pale, and almost dying woman, "what a misapplication of the word."

"So it seems to me ; yet they, who engage nightly in a round of gayety and dissipation, call it happiness."

"Yes, yes ; I once deemed it so ; but oh, how changed are my feelings now. And I am convinced that the lingering sickness I have endured this winter, and from which I can never recover,

was, in mercy sent to fit me for that change, which I must soon realize."

She had just finished this remark, when Clementina, arrayed with much elegance, and glittering with jewels, entered the room. Never had she looked more magnificently beautiful. Amid the dark braids of raven hair, gleamed costly pearls; upon her finely formed arm, shone the brilliant diamond, whilst from her large dark eye beamed a look of triumph. She approached the bedside of Mrs. Parkinson, and taking the pale hand that rested on the snowy counterpane, within her own jeweled fingers, she said:

"Dear aunt, I would stay at home to-night, but I had promised Capt. Ballew that I would permit him to wait on me this evening, and were I now to decline going, he would be offended. But the gay season will soon be over, and then I will give you my whole attention."

"Ah, child, ere the gay season closes, I shall no longer need the attention of any."

"You only feel a little low spirited; when the warm weather returns, you will soon regain your strength."

"I shall never feel the warm breath of spring fan my brow; but it matters not, I am even ready now to go."

The conversation was interrupted by a servant, who said to Miss Wilkie:

"Captain Ballew awaits you in the parlor."

Turning from the bedside, she said:

"I will not remain late this evening, and I will call again to see you when I return."

Jenny's eyes followed her with admiration, as she passed from the room with a queenly air. Then addressing her aunt, she said:

"Cousin Clementina is exceedingly beautiful; yet, I do not know that such rare beauty is to be coveted. It has a tendency to make one forgetful of all save self."

"Nay, darling, I am much to blame for the manner in which Clementina treats me. When in the enjoyment of health, I taught her by precept and example, that the great aim of life

was to gain admiration, and to become a leader in the world of fashion, I am now reaping the fruits of my false teaching."

"No doubt but that has its influence; but it is her great beauty and accomplishments, which draw around her a crowd of admirers whenever she enters a drawing-room, and this makes her desire to be constantly amid such scenes."

"No, it cannot be that. Is not Annie Grayson equally beautiful and admired? yet, how often does she turn from scenes of pleasure, to visit the poor and suffering."

"It is seldom you see one like Annie Grayson."

"True, from a very child, she was unlike others."

Mrs. Parkinson was now seized with a violent fit of coughing, which seemed as if it would suffocate her. When it had passed, she was so completely exhausted, that she gasped for breath.

Jenny gave her a few drops of medicine, meant to strengthen and revive her. She then pushed the mass of dark hair from the pale brow, and wiped from it the large drops of perspiration that weakness had caused to collect there. When her aunt had somewhat recovered, she imprinted a kiss upon her cheek, saying:

"Oh, it is too much to see you suffer thus, and not be able to do anything for you."

"Yes, you have done much, and you will see, when I am gone, that I have appreciated your self-sacrificing spirit."

"It has been no sacrifice, but a pleasure for me, to watch beside you."

We will leave the sick room, and look upon a far different scene, though but a few doors distant. Glad strains of music are echoing through brilliantly lighted apartments, and forms of grace and beauty are moving to its measure, whilst soul-lit eyes are gleaming with a language that the lips dare not utter. But we do not see the peerless Miss Wilkie among the dancers. It was to attend this party that she left her almost dying aunt. Where is she? Captain Ballew has drawn into the conservatory, ostensibly to show her a tropical plant of great beauty, but, in reality, to whisper in her ear a tale of love.

Captain Ballew belonged to the Navy, and he had not been

long returned from a cruise in the Mediterranean. In person, he is commanding and noble looking. His expansive forehead denotes a high order of intellect, and his dark hazel eyes bespeak a soul adorned with all the nobler qualities of our nature. This is his first winter in Washington society, but he had mingled much in the best society abroad, and his manner was that of the most polished gentleman. He received the most flattering attention from the ladies, which he returned with that graceful courtesy, which is so attractive.

The first evening he met Miss Wilkie, he was perfectly fascinated with her great beauty and brilliant conversation. This she observed, and determined to exert all her powers of pleasing to make a conquest of his heart. She had succeeded; and mid the rich fragrance of flowers, she is listening to a passionate declaration of love. When he had breathed his wild hopes and wishes, he gazed earnestly into the depths of her dark eyes, as if he would read there his fate ere she had spoken, and said:

"Oh, do not deem me presumptuous, that I have dared to aspire to the love of one so beautiful and gifted. I have that within me, that assures me I will win a name worthy of you."

"The happiness of my life is in your keeping," replied she, in a voice soft and musical, as the lute's sweetest tones. "I have learned to love you with a devotedness, that only passionate natures can know."

"What a priceless treasure is mine. Henceforth, it shall be the effort of my life to make you happy." Then, placing a curiously wrought ring upon her finger, he continued, "Let this be the betrothal ring."

A look of proud triumph swept over her features, but, it was soon succeeded by one of mortal paleness, for it seemed the apparition of Ella Stanmore was palpably before her, and the following words fell distinctly on her ear:

"It was mid such a scene as this, you dashed the cup of happiness from my lips, and not long shall you enjoy your present triumph."

When Captain Ballew noted the paleness on her brow, his arm stole lovingly around her waist, and he whispered in her ear:

"My own beautiful one, thy sensitive spirit is overcome with emotion ; how my heart presses thee for it !"

"'Tis but a momentary weakness. But let us return to the company, our absence may be noted."

When Clementina again mingled with the gay crowd, her usual vivacity seemed to have deserted her. Unpleasant memories of the past were haunting her, and with them, seemed strangely mingled, undefined fears for the future.

Captain Ballew attributed her subdued thoughtfulness to an exquisite sensibility that caused her to reflect with true womanly timidity on the events which had just transpired. As he gazed upon her fair face, she grew every moment more dear to his heart.

She retired from the brilliant scene at an unusually early hour, giving as an excuse to the hostess the situation of her aunt. When they were seated in the carriage, Captain Ballew took her delicate hand and pressed it to his lips, saying :

"My heart's idol, how I thank you, that you so soon left the gay revel, for I would be in the quiet of my own room to think over the great happiness that the future has in store for me."

"You are enthusiastic."

"How can I be otherwise ? Since I have known you, life has new beauties ; and now that you have promised to be mine, it seems bliss too exquisite to last. I almost fear 'tis a dream from which I may be rudely awakened."

Having arrived at home, he assisted her from the carriage, and wrapping her shawl carefully about her, he said :

"My own love, for the sake of one to whom you are dearer than life, be careful of your health."

With these words of fond endearment still sounding in her ear, Clementina threw herself into an easy chair, within the luxurious drawing room of her aunt's proud mansion, and gave way to a fit of musing. She had sat thus some time, when looking at her hand which was resting on the arm of the chair, she said aloud :

"Well, here is a ring of betrothal upon my finger ; but I do not love him, no, I have never met but one whom I could love, and he—But, pshaw ! what were hearts made for but play-things !

Let a person once love, and they are a very slave. Just see the proud, brave Captain Ballew. He is ready to obey my slightest wish. My pride is gratified; and as to love, bah! 'tis a childish folly!"

As she had promised, she called again in her aunt's room, and to her surprise, found a great change had come over her since the early part of the evening. She was convinced that she could not last many days longer. And did no feelings of self-reproach arise in her bosom for having paid her so little attention during the winter? Not the slightest. She only thought she would soon be sole possessor of her great wealth. How the love of this world's goods deadens the better feeling of our nature!

The next morning, Captain Ballew called on Miss Wilkie, and, finding her alone, he made a call of unusual length, portraying the bright pictures of happiness the future presented to him. When he rose to depart, he asked her permission to wait on her to a concert in the evening. This she declined, on account of the serious illness of her aunt. And he treasured it up, as another evidence of the amiability of her character.

It was time she should give up going into society, if she wished to avoid the imputation of heartlessness. The angel of death was hovering over the house, and ere a week had passed, Mrs. Parkinson had ceased to suffer. Jenny, who had watched untiringly beside her during the dark winter hours, now that the last struggle was over, retired to her own room, and gave way to a passionate fit of weeping. She had learned to love her aunt fondly; and how lonely and sad she now felt! Clementina also retired to her room. But it was not to weep, but to collect her thoughts; for it seemed there was a kind of presentiment of evil hanging over her for which she could not account.

The funeral had been over perhaps a week, and nothing had been said by either of the nieces as to the probable disposition of her property. Clementina took upon herself the ordering of everything about the household; whilst Jenny remained most of her time in her own room, determining to return home the first opportunity. Things were in this position, when Allington, in whose possession was the will of Mrs. Parkinson, called upon

Miss Wilkie. He was shown into a room next to the parlor, where she received persons who came on business. She seemed deeply absorbed in thought, when the servant announced him. In truth, her thoughts were occupied with the subject of the will. When she met the sinister expression of his glance, she almost shrank from it. It seemed to say: "Ah, Miss Wilkie, you, who are so proud and imperious, are completely in my power."

After conversing a short time, he said to her abruptly:

"It is rumored that you are to wed Captain Ballew. Is it true?"

"You have no right to ask such a question."

"Do you remember our contract with regard to the will?"

"I do."

"Under those circumstances, do you not think I am somewhat interested in knowing the truth of this rumor?"

"It was your own proposition."

"I now have another to make."

"What is it?"

"Give me five thousand dollars for the service I have done you."

"'Tis too much."

"As you please. But unless you give me that amount, I will destroy the will in my possession, and leave you to come in for your share with the legal heirs."

"I shall have to yield to your exorbitant demand. I am completely in your power; but I do hate imposition and injustice."

"You, Miss Wilkie, you hate imposition and injustice! Ha, ha, ha! now that is rich! I wonder you are not afraid the dead will rise from the grave to reproach you."

"I have said I accept your last proposition. Now, leave me."

This was said in an authoritative tone, for his mocking laugh and taunting words had roused her to fury. Rising from his seat, the young lawyer said:

"I obey your commands, fair lady. Shall I call this afternoon to make known to your cousin and yourself the contents of this will?"

"Yes, do so; but now, begone!"

"When you have signed this note," said he, drawing one from his pocket that he had prepared for the purpose.

How her spirit chafed at being obliged to do as she was bid! But she felt that she had placed herself in the power of an unprincipled man, and the quickest way to rid herself of his presence was to write the required signature. This being done, he left the house and proceeded to the office of one of the oldest lawyers of the city. He knew him to be an intimate acquaintance of Mr. Parkinson, for he had often met him at his house. He told old lawyer W. that he had in his possession the will of Mrs. Parkinson, and requested him, as he was an acquaintance of the family, to call with him at four o'clock in the afternoon, to make known its contents to her two nieces. The old lawyer told him he would accompany him with pleasure.

At four o'clock precisely, the gentlemen called, and the will was read to Clementina and Jenny. It gave all the possessions of Mrs. Parkinson to Clementina, save five hundred dollars, which was to be paid by her to Jenny. In the unselfishness of her heart, Jenny thought this a very just disposition of the property of her aunt. She thought, as a matter of course, Clementina should inherit her property. But not so the old lawyer. Bending a searching glance upon young Allington, he said :

"Are you sure you wrote that will precisely according to Mrs. Parkinson's dictation?"

"Why, of course! how could I make a mistake?"

"True enough. What is the date it bears?"

Upon the date being read to him, he said :

"Are you sure that is the date?"

"Certainly; just examine it yourself."

The old gentleman drew his spectacles from his pocket, and after looking at it carefully, he said :

"You are right, that is the date. Well, I have a will in my possession executed just one day later."

"You must be mistaken; she never said anything to me about having made another will."

"No, I presume not."

"It is very strange! I cannot conceive what caused her to make another will so soon after having executed the first."

"Well, I can tell you why she did it. The morning after she had executed the will in your possession, she called to spend the day with my wife, saying she had some business she wished me to attend to. She told me she had made a will the previous day, dividing her property equally between her two nieces; but during the night, she dreamed she had been deceived, that the will had not been written according to her dictation, but her entire property had been bequeathed to Miss Wilkie. She then awoke, and the dream was so vividly impressed upon her mind, it seemed that some one had actually told her such was the case. After thinking of it some time, she fell asleep, and the same dream was again presented to her. When she awoke the second time, she thought it strange, and determined to execute another will. She requested me to write it according to her dictation. I did so. When it was written, she read it herself. When she had done so, she said it was all right; I called in the witnesses, and she and they signed it. After they had left the room, she said to me: 'My dream of last night may be a phantasy engendered by weakness and disease; yet it impresses me so strangely, that I am impelled, by a feeling for which I cannot account, to make another will. When I shall have passed from earth, do not exhibit this will until the contents of the one in Allington's possession is known to you, and if by it my property is equally divided between my nieces, say to Jenny I wish her to give to Clementina the half of my possessions. I know her generous nature: she will hold my wishes sacred. But if my dream of last night should prove a true indication of what has been done, I make no such request.'"

Having made them acquainted with the cause of her making this will, he drew from his capacious pocket a sealed package; and breaking the seal, he soon made his auditors acquainted with its contents. When he had finished reading it, Clementina rose to her feet, and in a voice shrill with passion, almost shrieked:

"You are a vile plotter! and the paper in your hand is a base forgery! You would see me reduced to beggary, because I re-

ceive more attention in society than your own daughters. It is not probable that my aunt would disinherit me, of whom she was so proud, and leave her immense wealth to that ungraceful booby!" pointing to Jenny.

"I trust, Miss Wilkie, my course through a long life has placed me above such vile imputations; but having stooped to base plotting yourself, you accuse others."

"Leave the house! I will not listen to such insulting language beneath my own roof."

"It is the roof of Miss Lumpkin."

"What! impertinence added to insult! Jenny, order him to leave the house, if my request is not to be heeded."

Jenny was so much overcome with surprise and agitation, that she was unable to speak. And Clementina seeing that she remained silent, said to the old lawyer:

"Must I retire to my own room, to relieve myself from your presence?"

"As you please," replied he.

Clementina, wild with disappointment and passion, darted from the room. Allington disappeared about the same time, leaving the old gentleman and Jenny alone. Mr. W., perceiving she was so much surprised that she knew not what to say, addressed her as follows:

"Miss Lumpkin, you have heard the reading of your aunt's will. If you wish to retain me as counsellor to attend to your business, signify your wishes, and they shall be attended to."

"I am so bewildered, I really don't know whether I am awake or dreaming."

"True, child, you are too much agitated to give any directions now. I will call again," said he rising to go, "at any time you may designate."

"Call to-morrow at twelve; I will then have collected my thoughts, and you will advise me what to do."

"Certainly, child, certainly;" and with these words on his lips, he left the room.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE FRUIT OF VICE IS BITTERNESS.

WHEN the old lawyer, whose name was a by-word for uprightness and honesty, reached his office, he threw himself into a seat, and sat for some time in a musing mood; then, addressing a young man who was in the room, he said :

"Well, Charley, the longer I live, the more convinced I am that 'Honesty is the best policy.'"

"What has occurred to-day, to strengthen your conviction upon that subject?"

"You know the rich Mrs. Parkinson is dead?"

"Yes, sir."

"You remember her beautiful niece, Miss Wilkie?"

"I do; and she is as haughty as she is pretty."

"I think it likely her pride will have a fall."

"But what has that to do with your maxim, that 'Honesty is the best policy?'"

"That is just what I am going to tell you."

He then told the young man the circumstance of the two wills, with which the reader is already acquainted. When he had concluded, the young man said :

"That is just what she deserves; I am glad she is reduced to beggary."

"That is a wrong spirit, Charley, a wrong spirit. You should rather pity her, that she listened to the suggestions of the evil one, and caused a will to be written contrary to the wishes of her aunt, which is the cause of her being cut off without a dollar."

"Pity! Did she ever pity any one? Why, they say it was

her wicked machinations that caused the early death of sweet Ella Stanmore. Wrong spirit or not, I would be glad to see her crushed to the very earth with misfortune."

"Stop, Charley, it is wicked to suffer such a feeling to rest a moment in your bosom."

We will leave the old gentleman to lecture Charley, whilst we return to Clementina. When she left the drawing room, she hastened to her own apartment, locked the door, and then commenced walking up and down the room, at a furious rate, as if action were necessary to throw off the violence of her excitement. Occasionally, she would stop, stamp her foot, and mutter in a voice indicating the very concentration of rage :

"'Tis past endurance, to have my designs thwarted by the superstition of an old woman, and the arts of an uncultivated girl."

Finally, in the blindness of passion, as she moved across the room, she struck her foot against a beautiful mahogany sewing chair, which had been the gift of her aunt about a year previous. Seizing it with both hands, she dashed it violently against the hearth, and shivered it to pieces. Looking upon the fragments of the chair, she exclaimed :

"Ha ! that is capital, would that I could thus destroy all her possessions."

The smashing of the chair seemed to have wrought a change in her mood, for she threw herself upon a lounge, and clasping her hands upon her brow, she gave herself up to thought. Having remained thus twenty minutes or perhaps half an hour, she took her hands from her brow, rose from her recumbent position, and thus communed with herself :

"Well, it is fortunate I am affianced to Captain Ballew ; he is wealthy and holds a high position : as his wife, I will still queen it in the best circles. But I could strangle that creature, who has come between me and my aunt's possessions. I ought to have crushed her, ere she got such a hold upon my aunt's heart. But who could have dreamed of such a result. Oh, bitterness, to be thus humiliated !"

At this moment, a rap was heard at the door.

"Can I not be left quiet in my own chamber! What do you want?"

"Miss Jenny says—"

"I do not wish to hear what Miss Jenny says."

"Well, but Miss Jenny says—"

"If you repeat Miss Jenny's name again, I'll break your thick head."

Nannie did not doubt, but she would be as good as her word, for she had often felt the effects of her temper when angry. So, she concluded it would be her wisest plan to leave, without delivering Miss Jenny's message. She had just returned, and told Jenny Miss Clementina would not let her come into the room, nor listen to the message she bore, when the tea bell rang. Jenny descended to the dining room, thinking she would tell Clementina what she had been thinking of since she had learned she was an heiress, and the conclusion to which she had come respecting it. When she entered the dining room, she found Clementina was not there. After waiting sometime for her appearance, she sent Nannie to say tea was waiting for her. Nannie went doubtfully, for she feared her head might not be safe, if she disturbed Miss Clementina again.

But Jenny had so attached the girl to her, by gentleness and kindness, that she would perform her requests more readily than Clementina's commands, even at the risk of receiving a blow across the skull. She again rapped at the door.

"Did I not order you to not disturb me?"

"Yes, Miss, but tea is ready, and Miss—"

She was going to say, Miss Jenny is waiting for you, but, remembering the threat that had been made, if she spoke that name again, and having no doubt, but it would be executed, the word was arrested on her lips, and she concluded the sentence by saying:

"And Miss Clementina, won't you come down, while everything is nice and warm?"

"When I want tea, I can order it. And I bid you not to approach my door again, at the peril of your life, unless I ring for you."

Nannie returned to Jenny, telling her Miss Clementina did not

want tea. With a heavy heart, Jenny sat down alone to the tea table, and although she did not feel like touching a morsel of food, to prevent remarks from the servants, she forced herself to take a cup of tea, and a bit of toast. As she passed Clementina's room, in going to her own apartment, she thought to seek a few minutes conversation with her cousin. Stepping to the door, she tapped lightly, and hearing no voice from within, she waited a moment. The key was turned, and the door opened, and Miss Wilkie, with upraised poker in her hand, became visible. She was so blinded by passion, that she did not observe that it was Jenny instead of the servant, and exclaimed :

"You black fiend, I will teach you to obey my wishes," and brought down the poker with a violence that would have stricken Jenny to the earth, had she not stepped quickly aside, in time to escape the blow. When Clementina perceived her mistake, she closed the door hastily, saying, in a voice hoarse with passion :

"Miss Lumpkin, you are in haste to take airs upon yourself; not content with sending the servants to obtrude upon and annoy me, you must come yourself."

"Nay, Cousin Clementina, I—"

"Call me not cousin, you viper."

"I do not wish to annoy, but comfort you by—"

"I want none of your comfort."

"By telling you my intentions—"

"I will not hear them."

"I just want to tell you—"

"Do you wish to drive me to madness? Leave me."

Jenny, finding her attempts to procure an interview with her cousin but exasperated her the more, passed on to her own room. Her first act was to kneel and ask of her heavenly Father, wisdom to perform her duty aright. After this simple act of devotion, she rose, feeling less lonely and sad, with thoughts of the past and future busy in her heart.

Had Clementina listened to Jenny's intentions, she would have spared herself considerable anxiety. As soon as Jenny's surprise at finding herself an heiress had sufficiently subsided to enable her to think calmly, she determined to divide the possessions of

her aunt equally between herself and cousin. It was to tell her this, that she sought an interview with her.

After Clementina had not only refused to receive her message, but to converse with her, she determined she would not insist upon any conversation until Clementina herself sought it. She was as proud-spirited as Clementina, and what made the difference in their characters was, that Jenny had a kind and feeling heart, alive to every generous impulse, and all her acts were governed by correct principles; whilst Clementina was not only unprincipled, but perfectly heartless. Whether it was nature, or the training each had received, that made them thus different in character, we will not pretend to say. And how differently passed the night with the two maidens. Jenny, who felt conscious of having committed no wrong, not even in thought, slept sweetly. Whilst Clementina, as she reflected on the strange and almost supernatural manner in which her designs had been frustrated, was almost ready to curse the fates. There was but one subject upon which her thoughts could rest with anything like complacency, and that was, that she was affianced to a man of wealth, belonging to one of the best families in the country. The family to which Capt. Ballew belonged, particularly on the mother's side, had ever been remarkable for their abhorrence of aught that was unworthy and ignoble.

Towards morning nature became exhausted, and she fell into a troubled sleep. I say troubled, because her pillow was visited by unwelcome dreams. She dreamed the hour of her bridal had arrived. She was standing before the altar, with her hand clasped in that of Capt. Ballew, whilst his gaze rested upon her with love and admiration. The clergyman had just commenced reading the marriage service, when Allington snatched her from the side of her lover, saying: "You are mine, did you not sell yourself to me?" Consternation and astonishment seemed to reign for a moment, when Capt. Ballew pushed the intruder violently aside, saying: "I will chastise you as you deserve, for daring to lay your hand thus rudely upon my bride." To which Allington replied: "Nay, Capt. Ballew, you are an honorable man, and would have a contract sacredly complied with"

"Assuredly, but what mean you?" In answer to this question, Allington placed in his hand her aunt's will, and a written contract with her signature, wherein she agreed to become his wife at the end of five years, if she remained single till that time. When the eye of Capt. Ballew rested upon this paper, he turned upon her a look of anguish and reproach, saying: "Is this your writing?"

Ere she could reply to him, she awoke. Turning restlessly in bed, she exclaimed petulantly:

"Another dreaming farce, but I shall not be so silly as to give it a second thought."

She strove to sleep again, but the drowsy god would not heed her wooing. The remembrance of her dream impressed her unpleasantly, despite efforts to shake off the weakness. The sunlight was peeping through the shutters, and she rang the bell; for Nannie, in obedience to her commands of the previous evening, had kept from her room, consequently her morning fire was not kindled. Nannie answered the summons immediately. When she made her appearance, she ordered her to kindle the fire immediately, and then go to the kitchen and prepare her a cup of coffee, some toast, and an egg, and bring it to her room immediately.

"I 'spect you is hungry," said Nannie, "'case you didn't eat no supper."

"Shut your impertinent mouth, nor dare to utter a word save replies to my questions."

"Yes, Miss," responded Nannie, looking much frightened, and busying herself about kindling the fire. Having made the fire, she proceeded to put the room in order, for it was sadly disarranged from the effects of Miss Wilkie's excitement of the preceding evening. Stooping to pick up the fragments of the beautiful chair Miss Wilkie had shattered, her astonishment overcame her fear, and turning toward her with eyes stretched to twice their usual size, she exclaimed:

"Why bless me, Miss Cle—"

Her exclamation of surprise was suddenly brought to a close. For Clementina, who had been closely watching her as she moved

about the room, had almost divined her thoughts. And when the astonished servant turned towards her with this exclamation on her lips, Miss Wilkie seized a pillow and threw at her head, which coming unexpectedly into Nannie's face, stopped her mouth and caused her to lose her balance and measure her length upon the floor. When she had risen from her prostrate position, she did not finish the sentence, but proceeded to pick up the pieces of the broken chair. When she had done so, fearing to speak, she held it in her hands, and cast a look upon Miss Wilkie, as much as to say, what shall I do with it. Miss Wilkie understood her mute inquiry and replied:

"Toss it into the fire, and bring me my breakfast as soon as it can be prepared."

Nannie did so, and left, not waiting to be bid the second time. The fire soon diffused a genial warmth through the apartment, and Clementina arose and made her toilet, thinking action would dispel the unpleasant feeling that oppressed her. By the time she was in readiness for her breakfast, Nannie appeared, bringing it in nice order, and in addition to what she had ordered, was a beef steak prepared in a manner to satisfy an epicure. This Miss Wilkie noted, and said:

"Why did you bring that beef steak, I did not order it."

Nannie gave a blink with her eyes, indicating a fear that a brush Miss Wilkie held in her hand, might light upon her head, and then replied:

"Mammy made me fetch it, case she thought you would like it."

"Very well, put my breakfast on the table and leave me. When I desire your service I'll ring for you."

Having partaken of her breakfast, Nannie was summoned to make the bed and carry away the breakfast things. As she was leaving the room, Miss Wilkie told her if any one called during the day, and wished to see her, she must bring their card before she told them she was at home. When Nannie had left the room, she arranged her toilet with unusual care, for she supposed Capt. Ballew would call during the morning, as she had not seen him the previous day, and it was the first time since he had

made a declaration of his love, that he had failed to call some time during the day, if he remained but a moment. As she had expected, about ten o'clock, Nannie brought her his card. She ordered Nannie to return and say to him, she would be in the drawing-room in a moment. Nannie has just delivered her message and left the room, when she entered in all her glorious beauty, and approaching him held out her hand to him, expecting he would seize and carry it to his lips as was his wont. He took it within his own, which was as cold as if the angel of death had already stilled the pulsations of his heart. And indeed, its pulsations were almost stilled with anguish.

When Clementina felt its touch, she cast a searching glance upon his countenance, and its expression startled her, for it was so like it had appeared to her at the close of her dream, that she said hastily :

"You are ill?"

"Not ill, but heart sick."

"What should give you heart sickness?"

"I did not see you yesterday."

"You could have done so, by calling."

"I did call in the morning; the girl was standing at the door, and told me you were engaged in business with your lawyer, and did not wish to be disturbed."

"You are not jealous, that I should give a portion of my time to business?"

"Nay, but hear me to the close. I told her I would take a seat in the drawing-room, and when you had finished transacting your business I would see you. With what bright dreams of happiness was my heart overflowing when I entered that apartment; but how darkened was every earthly hope when I left it.

"I took a seat near the door that opens into the adjoining room. The door was slightly ajar, and I became an unintentional listener to a conversation between yourself and lawyer. Language cannot convey an idea of what I felt, when I learned from that conversation, that my heart's idol, she, whom I deemed but little lower than the angels, had sullied the purity of her nature, for the sake of securing to herself the entire wealth of her

aunt. A blindness fell upon my vision, all external objects faded from my sight, and I saw nothing but the blighted and crushed hopes of my own heart. As soon as I was sufficiently self-possessed I left the house. For I could not bear to see you until strengthened by reflection. I came this morning to release you from your betrothal, and say to you, although your image is ineffaceably engraven on my heart, I will never wed one, whom I cannot respect."

As Clementina listened to the above recital, the smile which rested on her face when she entered the room faded from her lips, and at its close, she was pale and motionless. She was perfectly disconcerted. But soon recovering herself, she said :

"A pretty romance you have entertained me with this morning, Capt. Ballew."

"Nay, Clementina, speak not thus mockingly, I would it were romance. But it is a stern, incontrovertible truth, that has shattered as bright a dream of happiness as ever nestled in a human heart."

Overcome by emotion, and unwilling to betray what he deemed his weakness, he rose to depart, saying :

"Miss Wilkie, let us part in kindness, and may the wealth you possess, bring you happiness and satisfy all the cravings of your heart."

Miss Wilkie had also risen to her feet, and knowing she could not justify herself, she drew herself up proudly, and said, in a tone cold as an icicle :

"Thank you for your kind wishes, Capt. Ballew, and as neither of us will derive any pleasure from a prolonged conversation, permit me to bid you good morning."

When Capt. Ballew had left the house, her proud mien forsook her, for she remembered, with all her imperious notions, and extravagant tastes, she was penniless, and entirely dependent upon Jenny, whom she had ever treated with rudeness and contempt. Sinking upon the sofa, from which she had risen at the departure of Capt. Ballew, she rested her head upon her hand, and murmured to herself :

"Had I known this last night, I would have met the advances

of Jenny differently. But I'll not humble myself to her. I will rule the household as entirely as I have done. I presume she will not have the spirit to hinder me."

Rising, as if some thought had just occurred to her, she went to her own room, and a violent ring of the bell, brought Nannie to her. As she entered, Miss Wilkie said :

"Did Capt. Ballew call yesterday?"

"Yes, Miss."

"Why did you not tell me?"

"You had given me orders, if any one wished to see you, to say that you were engaged with business, and could not see company."

"But he took a seat in the drawing room?"

"Yes, Miss, he said he would wait till you were through with your business."

"Why did you not come and tell me?"

"Case I was afeard you would—"

A violent box on the ear sent Nannie reeling against a wardrobe, leaving the sentence unfinished on her lips. When she recovered herself, she stood rubbing her ear, with mouth agape, fearing to speak, lest she should offend. Miss Wilkie cast upon her a look as if she would annihilate her, and then said :

"Leave my presence instantly, and do not let me see your face again to-day."

As Nannie descended the stairs muttering, the following words were distinguishable :

"Gracious knows, I'd be glad if I never seed her face agin, so I didn't lose my eye-sight."

When she got to the kitchen, she gave vent to her indignation :

"I raly 'bleve Miss Clem's agwine crazy."

"Why?" queried two or three voices.

Nannie commenced a recital of the indignities she had received, mentioning the broken chair. But, the ringing of the door bell obliged her to leave her curious auditors, before she had completed her story.

Upon going to the door, she found an old gentleman, who asked to see Miss Lumpkin. Asking him to be seated in the

drawing room, she took his card to Jenny, wondering what he could want to see her for : it was so unusual for any one to ask for Miss Jenny. After Jenny had descended, and the drawing room door was closed, Nannie determined to learn what was the object of his visit. And, for this purpose, she slipped into the adjoining room. Having remained there some time, she ran to the kitchen, exclaiming :

“ Good news, mammy, good news : we doesn’t ’blong to Miss Clementina.”

CHAPTER XXXVII.

VIRTUE REWARDED.

THAT our readers may understand the cause of Nannie's exclamation, in the last chapter, it is necessary to make them slightly acquainted with the situation of Mrs. Parkinson's affairs. Although her property consisted chiefly in houses, and stocks, yet, some years previous to her death, finding it difficult to hire good servants, she had bought the mother of Nannie, with her family, which consisted of two girls and a boy. Nannie was the youngest, and Mrs. Parkinson had taken her for her own dressing maid, and treated her with much indulgence and kindness, for Nannie, with a tact peculiarly her own, had learned to adapt herself to the whims and caprices of her mistress, and she was seldom found fault with. However, we must do Mrs. Parkinson the justice to say, that although a hard woman in many respects, she treated her servants kindly. In truth, she had that kind of selfishness, which made her think they were better than other servants, merely because they were hers. But Clementina had ever treated them harshly. It seemed she tyrannized over the servants, in proportion to the amiability she assumed in society. When Mrs. Parkinson died, her servants grieved sincerely. They, as well as every one else, supposed, as a matter of course, that they would pass into Clementina's possession, and they had spoken of it among themselves with regret. But Nannie, more than any, felt the change: Clementina had taken her for her own maid, and all her ill temper and disappointment was vented upon Nannie. When, in listening to the conversation between Jenny and the lawyer, she learned she did not belong to Clementina,

she was so much overjoyed, that her desire to communicate it to her mother, so overcame that curiosity, which is a characteristic of her race, that she did not remain to hear the close of the conversation, but ran to tell the good news.

We will leave her to impart what knowledge she has of the state of affairs, whilst we describe the interview between Jenny and the lawyer. When she entered the room where the old gentleman was sitting, she said :

"Oh, I am so glad you have come, I need counsel and a friend so much. You will tell me just what I must do, and how I must do it."

"Certainly, child."

"I can scarce realize that I am the possessor of so much wealth. It seems so strange that I, who expected nothing from my aunt, should be her heir, whilst Clementina, who was brought up by her, and upon whom I thought she would bestow all, is left without anything."

"It is the hand of an overruling Providence, who, sometimes, very mysteriously, overthrows the best laid plans of the wicked. It is but a punishment for her wickedness and ingratitude in neglecting her aunt during her last illness, whilst you, unselfishly, devoted yourself to her. You are worthy of the fortune that has fallen to your lot."

"But I cannot conscientiously retain it. I will divide it equally with my cousin, as it was the intention of my aunt to do. I wished to tell her so last evening, but she would not hear me."

"It is well enough. You need be in no hurry to commit yourself, as to what you will do. At any rate, you cannot make a conveyance to another of any of the property to which you have fallen heir, unless you are of age, which, judging from your appearance, I presume is not the case."

Nor was she of age. Something more than a year must elapse ere she could legally transact business. Before the close of the interview, it was arranged that he should be her guardian during that time; and take the entire management of her business. At his request, she consented to communicate to no one her inten-

tion with regard to the division of the estate, "For," said he, "you may change your mind; or, if you should not, it will be well enough to teach Clementina a lesson in life she has not yet learned. Hitherto, she has been admired, followed, and caressed, as the wealthy beauty. Now, let her see how she will be estimated when it is known she is dependent upon the generosity of her cousin."

We will now turn from Jenny, and her affairs, to the pleasant parlor of Mrs. Stanmore. Emma Carlton, now Mrs. Belmont, had just placed in the hand of her husband a letter, and was telling him she had received it just before her marriage, when her circumstances were such that she would have yielded to despair but for unfailing trust in the kindness and protecting care of her Heavenly Father. When she had told him how it contained one hundred dollars, which enabled her to pay fifty dollars which she had borrowed, and yet leave her in possession of a sufficient sum to make her feel perfectly independent, she looked fondly into his face, saying:

"Now, will you examine it closely? perhaps you can assist me in discovering who wrote it, that I may express my thanks for the delicate manner in which assistance was rendered."

"I can read your thoughts in your ingenuous face, but it was not I who wrote it; yet I think I know who did."

"Who?"

"I saw Annie Grayson place a letter that resembled this in the hands of a boy, on the morning you received the one I hold in my hand."

"Just like that dear girl! She knew I would hesitate in receiving so large a sum from her, were she to offer it in person, and she took this delicate mode of obliging me to become a recipient of her generosity."

Emma had scarce concluded this remark, when Annie Grayson entered the room. Mr. Belmont placed the letter in her hand, saying:

"Can you tell us who wrote that letter?"

She glanced at it, and returned it, remarking.

"It is useless to waste time in trying to discover the writer,

particularly as I have just called to ask Emma to go a shopping with me, that I may have the benefit of her fine taste in making my purchases."

"Certainly, my time is entirely at your service, for the next month, not only to assist you in making purchases, but in preparing the bridal robes, if you will accept my service. If fortune has smiled on me, I have not forgotten the use of my scissors and needle."

"Nay, I will not tax you thus heavily," said Annie, a bright blush mantling her cheek at Emma's allusion to her approaching marriage, which was to take place a few weeks previous to the adjournment of Congress.

Yes, Annie Grayson, who has passed the ordeal of mingling in Washington society, followed by a crowd of admirers, yet retaining that purity and simplicity of character which won all hearts to love her when a child, is soon to wed one worthy of that priceless gem, the love of a true-hearted woman. Edwin Stanmore has asked of Mr. Grayson the hand of his daughter; and not only he, but the proud mother deems it an eligible match for her daughter. The reputation he has acquired for eloquence and superiority of intellect during this his first session in Congress, gives promise that he may, in time, aspire to any office he may desire. Mrs. Grayson thinks only of the position of her future son-in-law, whilst her husband reflects that he commits the happiness of his child to one who can appreciate her, and whose noble qualities will command the respect of his fellow-men, whether his station be a public or private one. Annie's heart is filled with quiet happiness; and whilst her mother is making preparations for a splendid wedding, her thoughts often wander to the quiet home awaiting her in the West, and the true-hearted, though unpolished friends of him who is to be her husband, and she is well assured she will receive a kindly welcome from them.

Had Annie consulted her own feelings, she would have preferred having the marriage ceremony quietly performed in the presence of a few friends; for she regarded marriage as one of the most holy sacraments of the Church, and she felt that she would enter into it with serious thought, surrounded by a few

friends, instead of being in the midst of a gay and thoughtless crowd. But she yielded to the wishes of her mother, who said, as she had but one child to give way in marriage, she should have a wedding worthy of the name she bore. How many young girls there are who, when about to be married, think only of the elegant bridal robes, and the brilliant parties which will be given her as a bride, without giving one thought to the duties which will be imposed upon her! When the parties are over, and the gloss is worn from the beautiful dresses prepared for the occasion, and she is expected to settle down quietly into her new sphere, she finds she has no taste for such a dull kind of life; and her husband learns with regret, that she has none of those qualities which shed a charm over the domestic circle.

Not one of those was Annie Grayson. She gave not a thought to the brilliant parties which were sure to succeed her wedding; but how she should perform those duties which her new relation would bring, was frequently reflected on.

The bridal eve arrives. The mansion of Mrs. Grayson is crowded with the most distinguished persons in the city. The clergyman is awaiting the appearance of the bride, and every eye is turned toward the door. At length, the bride-maidens, with their attendants, enter, followed by the bride, whose hand rested lightly on the arm of Edwin Stanmore, as he proudly led her forward. As she passed toward the centre of the room, whispered exclamations, similar to those which her appearance called forth, when we first presented her a fairy child to our readers, were again heard. And, indeed, she was surpassingly beautiful, as, with a slight blush mantling her cheek, she stood before the clergyman, to take upon herself the marriage vows. She had insisted upon consulting her own taste, with regard to her dress, and, instead of being robed in costly satins and delicate blondes, with a sufficient quantity of jewelry upon her person to dower a bride, she was simply attired in a pure white muslin, with no ornament, save a wreath of orange flowers encircling her fair brow, and a white rose-bud, about half blown, upon her bosom. The entire arrangements of her dress bespoke purity and refine-

ment of sentiment, and a total absence of that love of display which indicates a low and unrefined mind.

When the marriage ceremony was ended, and friends crowded round to congratulate the newly wedded pair, there was one who could scarcely speak the wishes for their happiness with which her heart was swelling. It was Mrs. Stanmore. As she looked upon the face of her son, which was radiant with happiness, she thought of her gentle daughter, whose blighted hopes had hurried her to an early grave. These thoughts were made more vivid by a letter from Frederick Leroux, which had been received a few days previous. It was a reply to one Edwin had written him, urging him to come to his wedding. In his answer, he says :

"No, no, my heart's dearest friend, although I wish every joy that earth can give may rest upon the pathway of you and my cousin Annie, I could not bear to be present and witness the consummation of your happiness. It would contrast too painfully with my own crushed, withered feelings, and crushed, too, by my own weakness and folly. Never again can a dream of love lighten the weariness of my heart.—Henceforth, I will devote myself to my country, in compliance with Ella's last injunctions to me. I will not visit Washington again, unless it be to take a seat as a member in the National council. It is not often I indulge in the weakness of intruding upon others the desolation of my heart; but you, the brother of Ella, who knew all her gentle virtues, can appreciate my feelings and excuse me, for what some would term a morbid, effeminate indulgence in grief. I have laid my heart thus before you, that you may fully understand why I refuse to be present at your wedding. May you be as happy as you deserve, is the wish of one upon whose heart death has cast a shadow that time cannot remove. F. LEROUX."

And was every heart in that gay assembly, save that of Mrs. Stanmore, as perfectly joyous as the smile on the lip would indicate?

That such was the case, we cannot positively assert. But this we do know, fair young forms moved gracefully through the

mazy dance, and soft eyes rested lovingly upon manly forms, as if questioning, why life should not be ever thus bright. Among those who thought thus, was Mary Selden. She was first bride's-maid, and Francis Collingwood was first groom's-man. He had devoted himself to her during the evening, and, as she listened to his earnest tones, she said within her heart: "Why could I not retain him ever by my side? I know he loves me: his eyes have said so a hundred times, although he has never permitted his tongue to breathe a syllable of what his feelings are. Well, well, the tongue often speaks a language the heart does not dictate, but the eyes, never. So, I will e'en content myself that, in time, I shall listen to the language that will be as music to my ear."

And she did listen to that language, even sooner than she anticipated. Ere the wedding guests had departed, he had told her of his love, and learned from her, that the loss of his property, which had kept him silent so long, instead of preventing her from accepting his hand, was, in fact, the removal of a hindrance, as she had promised her father never to listen to the addresses of one who was the owner of a slave.

It is strange how much the full heart can utter in a short time, for although Mary and Francis Collingwood were but a few moments from the side of Edwin Stanmore and his bride, it was arranged that, instead of leaving for the south in a few days, as he had intended doing, he would become one of the party, who were to accompany the newly married pair to their western home.

Of the many glad hearts together assembled on that evening, none were more truly blest, or contributed more to the entertainment of the company, than Mrs. Belmont. During the evening, Annie drew her to the harp, saying:

"Dear Emma, it may be long ere we meet again beneath the roof of my father, and you must give us a farewell song, that, when years have past, and my thoughts turn to this evening, the dearest friend of my happy childhood may have a conspicuous place on memory's tablet. Your music ever lingers about my heart, leaving a pleasant impress."

Emma ran her fingers over the harp's strings, drawing forth a sweet strain of melody, and then sang :

A farewell song ! Speak not the word,
When hearts are beating glad and gay ;
But as I gently touch these strings,
Let me thy future lot portray.

Life's fairest promises are thine ;
Thou'rt going forth a happy bride,
With one who knows thy heart's true worth,
To steer thy bark, adown Time's tide.

May every hope that swells thy heart,
Be more than realized by thee ;
The past for thee hath no sad thought,
And may thy future brighter be.

If purity of heart can give
Exemption from each earthly care,
Thy brow, which is so sunny now,
No mark of grief will ever wear.

Or, if the prayers of grateful hearts
Can bring thee blessings from on high,
Thou art secure from every harm,
Where'er thy future pathway lie.

The memory of thy generous deeds,
And kindly words to sufferers given,
Will cause them to remember thee,
When they address their prayers to Heaven.

Emma's song was prophetic of the future of her friend. That same kindliness of heart which had won her so many friends in Washington, attached all hearts to her in the home to which her husband bore her. Had she been ambitious of wordly honors, her proudest aspirations would have been satisfied, for his talents secured for him offices of the highest distinction ; but it was not this that constituted her happiness. Edwin Stanmore was as much beloved in private life for his virtues, as he was distinguished for his talents in public. She found him, like herself, ever ready to relieve the suffering, and comfort the sorrowing.

Now, having disposed of our heroine in marriage, we should, according to the most approved mode, conclude our story. But we think our readers are sufficiently interested in Miss Wilkie, and some others, to read another chapter, and learn what fate has in store for them.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

CONCLUSION.

THE twenty four hours had elapsed after the last interview referred to between Captain Ballew and Miss Wilkie, he had left the city. Had he remained until it was publicly known that, instead of being a wealthy heiress, she was left penniless, his noble generosity of spirit might have brought him again to her side. At least, that she hoped such would be the case is evident from the feeling she manifested upon reading the following paragraph in one of the morning papers, about two weeks after she had parted from him with so much hauteur :

"Captain Ballew, who, during the winter, has been a favorite in Washington society, has again left the shores of his native land, to be absent on a three years' cruise. The vessel to which he belonged sailed from the Norfolk Navy Yard yesterday. We doubt not but many a fair lady's heart will experience a feeling of regret as her bright eye scans this paragraph. He was decidedly a favorite with the ladies, for he is a fine specimen of that true-souled, noble class to which he belongs."

After reading the above, she laid the paper down, and as an anxious look passed over her face, she said :

"I deemed his generous sympathy would bring him to me when he heard how I am situated ; but 'tis too late to indulge such a hope."

She sat for a few moments seemingly in a musing mood ; then rising to her feet, she swept proudly across the room, and placing herself before her mirror, she contemplated with complacency her faultless form and rare personal beauty. Then, turning away she continued :

"But fate shall not crush me! I have lost none of my charms; I have the same determined will that has enabled me, since a child, to cause others to yield to my wishes, and I will make Jenny and her fortune subservient to me. In the first place, I will array myself in the most becoming style of mourning. Hitherto, my style has been brilliant, sparkling, fascinating. Now, it must be gentle, subdued, appealing, in accordance with my changed circumstances and my mourning robes. And as it is not etiquette to appear in large and gay assemblies whilst wearing mourning, I will give entertainments at home, inviting a few select and distinguished persons."

Having come to this conclusion, she ordered the carriage, and went out to do her shopping, without saying anything about it to Jenny. The first store at which she called was one at which she had been in the habit of making her purchases for the last two or three years. When she entered, the proprietor and all his clerks seemed to be engaged in waiting on customers. Instead of hastening to her, as usual, with: "Miss Wilkie, let us show you some of our beautiful goods to-day," they left her until others were served, and then approached her, saying, with an air of great indifference:

"What will you have to-day?"

Although somewhat indignant at the lack of that obsequiousness which she had been accustomed to receive when she formerly came to make purchases, she called for the most expensive mourning goods, and having made a bill of about a hundred dollars, she ordered them to be sent home; and turned to leave the store, when the gentleman, who had waited on her, said:

"Miss Wilkie; I am sorry to detain you, but we have a note in bank that we are obliged to pay in a few days, and consequently we have to make it a rule, to send out no goods this week until they are paid for, therefore, if you will settle for the purchases you have just made, you will do us a great favor."

She cast on him a look as if she would annihilate him and replied:

"If that is your rule, you can just place those purchases on your shelves again, for I do not suffer myself to be asked for a

bill. I have traded with you thousands of dollars, but I'll never spend another cent with you."

"Sorry, Miss, to have offended you, but that was my orders."

Without deigning to reply, she left the store with the air of a princess. When she had taken her seat in the carriage, she ordered the coachman to drive to another store where she had sometimes dealt. Here she found no customers. To her inquiry for mourning goods, one of the young men in the store replied :

"They had no mourning goods, but those of a very inferior quality, such as he was sure would not be worn by her."

There was something in the tone and manner of the speaker that convinced her that he uttered an untruth, and it flashed across her mind, that it was the knowledge that she was not the heir of the wealth, which it had been supposed would be hers, that had caused her to receive such treatment. She returned home very indignant, but realizing that she was perfectly dependent on Jenny, consequently she would be obliged to treat her differently from what she had hitherto done. Jenny was ready to receive advances from Clementina, and when she proposed to her that they should make some addition to their wardrobes, Jenny readily assented. They went together to the stores, Clementina selecting the goods and Jenny paying for them. This was extremely mortifying to the imperious spirit of Clementina, but there was no avoiding it. She solaced herself by reflecting, that if the loss of money rendered her a person of less consequence with shop-keepers, a class with whom she had no intercourse save in trading, it would not have that effect in society, where she was admired for her graces of mind and manner ; and, as she still retained these, she could continue to draw around her a crowd of admirers. But it was not long till she learned, that the higher class, the world of fashion, which had been her idol, placed just as high an estimate upon the "almighty dollar," as those whom she termed the ignoble herd.

In pursuance with her determination, she gave dinner parties, inviting a select few stars of fashion and distinguished persons ; but great was her indignation and surprise, to observe, that, instead of receiving all the attention herself, Jenny was treated

with quite as much consideration and attention as she who had been the belle and beauty of Washington society for the last four years. She was perfectly furious, but dared not vent her ill temper on Jenny, for since she had treated her as an equal, and found it to her interest to study the character of her hitherto despised cousin, she discovered she had firmness of character, that she had not given her credit for. When she remembered the insult and contumely she had formerly heaped upon Jenny, she trembled for the consequences, fearing she might retaliate. She judged Jenny by herself; the nobler traits of her character she could not comprehend. Being obliged to put a restraint on her violent temper, even in her intercourse with Jenny, the paroxysms of rage and indignation to which she gave way when in the privacy of her own room, were almost fearful to behold. She cursed the fates and the silly weakness of her aunt, that had placed her in this humiliating, dependent situation; not remembering it was only the frustration of her own duplicity and wicked designs against another. Thus it ever is with the unprincipled, when fortune which for a time seemed to smile upon them at last abandons them, they curse the fates.

The heart of Jenny yearned to look upon the humble home of her childhood, and the faces of those dear ones, who had loved her so truly. She made her arrangements to go home in company with Mrs. Stanmore and her party. In the early part of the winter, whilst it was presumed Miss Wilkie would possess great wealth, Miss Keldon had extorted a promise from her that she would pass the summer months at the country seat of her father on the Hudson, which she described as being almost an earthly paradise. When Jenny bade Clementina adieu, she placed in her hand a sum of money and told her, that if during her visit to Miss Keldon, she should need more, to write to her and it should be furnished her. But, Clementina did not visit Miss Keldon, for the very good reason, that she was not asked by her to fulfil the engagement she had urged her to make. Miss Keldon left the city without even calling to bid her adieu. Others too, who had always insisted upon Miss Wilkie's forming one of their party in visiting some watering place during the

summer, treated her with like neglect, and she was left to spend the long, warm summer months in the city, whilst all the world of Washington, whom she thought anybody, was absent at different places of amusement.

The lonely wearisome summer has passed. Congress has re-assembled, the gayeties of the winter have commenced, but Miss Wilkie is no longer pointed out to strangers as the reigning belle, the impersonation of all that is elegant and beautiful, consequently, she is passed by without attracting any particular attention. In truth, a great portion of the admiration and attention, that a reigning belle in Washington receives, is not elicited so much by her superiority over others, as from the circumstance, that her name is upon every lip; and the crowds of strangers who visit the city, as a matter of curiosity, wish to have her pointed out to them, and the next desire is to be introduced to her, that they may have it to say, that they have been introduced to, and received a glance and a smile from the celebrated belle and beauty. Crowds are thus drawn constantly around her, pouring compliments and flattery into her ear, till she really believes she is something more than ordinary mortals; this adulation becomes necessary to her, and life seems a dreary blank without it. Thus it was with Miss Wilkie. Although, by the generosity of her cousin, she was in possession of all that was necessary to make her happy, she was perfectly miserable. Those who had envied her, could they have looked into her heart, might have pitied her now; for in her bosom raged every feeling, which the Evil One implants in the hearts of those whom he wishes to torment. And yet upon her lip plays the blindest smile, and her voice is modulated to the gentlest tone. Thus passed her life. When Jenny attained the age that she could legally transact business, she, as she had always intended doing, put her cousin in possession of the half of her aunt's estate. Clementina now supposed she would regain her lost position, but in this she was much mistaken, the magic of her name had passed away. She gave entertainments, they were well attended, for the crowd is ever willing to be entertained. She dressed with more than usual magnificence and elegance, displaying herself

constantly in society, hoping to lure back the worshipping crowd, but all her efforts were vain. Although many years have passed, she still mingles much in society, and as time moves on, she seems to covet more anxiously that admiration which once she received. At levees, receptions and assemblies, you will see her faded face, glossed over with an artificial bloom, derived from paints and cosmetics, whilst the furrows worn by the footprints of time, are attempted to be concealed by a preparation procured for that purpose.

She has cultivated none of those virtues which shed a charm around the declining years of a true woman. Life, for her, has no pleasure. She is constantly recurring to the vanished dreams of the past, making a darker shadow rest upon the present by the contrast. Thus ended all the proud aspirations of her youth, in the overthrow of her ambitious projects, and the endurance of cold neglect, which, to such a spirit as hers, is the greatest punishment she can endure.

We will turn from Clementina to Jenny, who is a loved and honored wife. When she had finally settled all her business, she became the wife of Doctor Danforth, the student with whom she became acquainted during the illness of her aunt, to whom she had been engaged for some time, only waiting till she could execute what she supposed was really the wishes of her aunt, by putting Clementina in possession of the half of her estate, before she made him her guardian and husband. The wealth she possesses enables her to dispense blessings, not only to her own family, but to many others. Her name is mentioned with love and respect by all who know her. Life, to her, is a long bright season of joy, for in her bosom flourish those virtues that give happiness. Among those who cherish her name with love, is Nannie and her family, to whom she gave freedom, and enabled them to procure comfortable homes in Illinois.

Soon after the return of Mary Selden to Quincy, there was a wedding party assembled at the mansion of Squire Selden. Francis Collingwood, although a Southron, won the respect and admiration of Mary's family; and, as he was not the actual owner of slaves, her father overlooked the misfortune of his being the

son of one who, during his life time, had owned them, and gave him his daughter. They remained during the summer in Quincy. In the fall, he received a letter from his sister, urging him to bring his young bride, whom she would love dearly for his sake, and spend the winter with her. "Do not refuse me," wrote she, "my health is very delicate, and I may not see another winter, and I beg you, by the memory of the love you bore me when a child, to come and spend this with me."

Thus adjured, he complied with her request. When he arrived at her beautiful home, he found her health even worse than her letter had led him to believe. She was confined to her room. When he presented his young wife to her, and witnessed the affectionate manner with which she imprinted a sister's kiss upon her brow, he was glad that he had overcome his reluctance to becoming an inmate beneath the roof of his brother-in-law, and had complied with her request to spend the winter with her. But he could scarce restrain his tears, when, a moment after, she threw her arms around his neck, exclaiming:

"Oh, Frank! dear Frank! how could you remain so long absent from me, your only sister, who loved you so much? But now, that you have brought a sister to my heart and home, it will compensate me for what I have suffered from your seeming indifference to my love."

By a strong effort, he mastered his emotion, and replied playfully:

"I was seeking for the sister to bring you; and now, I trust, you two will be happy together."

"Ah, indeed, will we: her very name is music to my ear. How I love the name of Mary!"

And they were happy together. The sprightly cheerfulness of Mary cheered many an hour that would have been passed in weary loneliness, but for her. It was as Mrs. Watson had anticipated: this was her last winter on earth. Ere the long, bright summer months had come, she was with the angels.

Her husband had sought her for her wealth, but her gentle amiability had made her very dear to him, and he loved to gratify her every wish. Just before her death, he was seated

beside her. She had lain sometime with her eyes closed as if sleeping, but suddenly she unclosed them, and, looking fondly into her husband's face, said :

"Dear Henry, I have been thinking I would like to have my brother remain with you, when I am gone. I know how he loves the home of his childhood. Let me ask him to stay ? He cannot refuse my dying request."

"Yes, Carrie, I would gladly have Frank to stay with me. And, as heaven had denied us children, at my death, I would leave all our possessions to him."

"Thank you, Henry, thank you ; you cannot know the pleasure your words have given me."

It was but a few days after this conversation till the form of Carrie Watson was borne to the tomb. And not long did her husband remain behind her, although in perfect health at the time of her death. He was suddenly attacked with a violent illness, which carried him off in a few days, but not before he fulfilled his promise to his wife, by executing a will making his brother-in-law his heir. Thus, Mary Selden found herself the wife of one upon whose plantation there was at least a hundred slaves. When the business had been all arranged, and Francis Collingwood was recognized as possessor of property which, by right, had always been his, knowing the sentiments of his wife's family in regard to slavery, he told her he would be guided by her wishes altogether in the disposition of his slaves. For his own part, his impression was that he would be doing them no kindness to give them their freedom, but yet he would in this matter be directed by her. After some reflections, she told him, although her opinion with regard to the injustice of slavery was unchanged, yet her residence in the South had convinced her that it would be doing no kindness to those people to emancipate them at once, and oblige them to leave the home where they always dwelt. Therefore, they must do as others did, who were so unfortunate as to be the owner of slaves : take care of them, until some reasonable plan was devised to rid the country of this curse. And before she had resided many years in the South,

and witnessed the kindly relations that existed between master and slave, she even ceased to think of it as a curse.

Presuming our readers would like to hear something more of Frederick Leroux, we will again refer to him. When he returned home with his hopes crushed, and his heart made desolate by the death of Ella Stanmore, he determined to devote himself to the service of his country, for his was a temperament that would not suffer him to remain listless and inactive. As, when he was a frequenter of the salons of fashion, he was ever a favorite of the ladies; so, when he entered the arena of public life to contend for its honors, success ever crowned his efforts. As soon as he attained the age that rendered him eligible according to the Constitution, he was honored by his native State with a seat in the United States Senate. And this position he has continued to occupy ever since, save when he was sent a representative of his country to a Foreign Court. In this, as well as every position he has occupied, he won the admiration and respect of all with whom he had intercourse. His political course has been so far removed from anything like management or intrigue, that his most violent political opponents can find nothing to bring against him. All admit his public acts indicate the purest, noblest love of country, and a desire to make her great and prosperous. No thought of self-aggrandisement and personal advancement, as is the case with too many politicians, seems to enter his mind. The word *politician* does not apply to him: he is a statesman, and one whose name will go down to posterity unsullied by aught that can cast a shadow upon his fair fame. Whilst his public character is above reproach, his private character might serve as a model to those occupying high places. In manner, he is graceful and dignified; in conversation, intellectual and refined. He is addicted to none of the dissipations and fashionable vices that sometimes attach to those who have mingled long in the fashionable society of Washington. Indeed, it has been regarded as a matter of surprise with some, that, being unrestrained by a wife and family ties, he should retain that purity and elevation of character which so strikingly distinguish him. But could they look into his heart, they would cease to wonder. The image of

Ella Stanmore, like a sacred thing, is shrined in his bosom, and the memory of her gentle virtues exercises a purifying influence upon his spirit.

Though many years have passed since she, the bright star of his early manhood, faded from his sight, yet, often in the quietude of his own room, after having devoted the day to the discussion of important national affairs, may he be seen gazing on a faded flower, the Japonica worn by Ella on the evening her bright hopes were so suddenly blighted, and bequeathed to him as a memento to remind him that earth's pleasures are perishing. As he looks upon this faded flower, memories of the past are vividly called up, and he renews his determination of keeping his spirit unsullied by aught that is debasing. Little deem they with whom he is in daily intercourse, of those passages of his heart's history which have so much influenced his destiny. Yet, this is life. Often beneath a cold, grave exterior, beats a heart overflowing with the kindest sympathies of human nature.

Now, I presume the reader wishes to know something of Eulalie's destiny. When Frederick Leroux came to Washington as Senator, she accompanied him. Here, she again met Charles Peyton. He had struggled successfully with adverse fortune, and attained an honorable position among men. He was a representative in Congress from one of the South-Western States. Each had remained true to the memory of their early love, and, now, they were wedded. The uninterrupted happiness of their future lives compensated them for their early trials.

Having disposed of our principal characters, we will say a few words to our readers. The little story we have woven is not purely fiction, but is in most cases real descriptions of life in Washington. Clementina Wilkie is a living embodiment and the representative of a class who actually may be seen in Washington, who, in youth, cultivate only those external graces which attract an admiring crowd; and when the charms of youth have fled, and they are no longer admired, having no resources within themselves, and no taste for domestic pleasures, they may still be seen at all those places where fashionably dressed and vain women love to exhibit themselves. Annie Grayson is a picture

from life of one whose position and relations obliged her to mingle constantly in frivolous and fashionable society; yet the active principle of piety with which her spirit was imbued preserved her from becoming vain and heartless, whilst it enabled her, against all adverse influences, to imitate the example of her Divine Master, by administering to the wants of her fellow creatures. Emma Carlton shows the sustaining power of religion in life's most trying hour; whilst Ella Stanmore is an exemplification of the power of religion to triumph over man's last enemy—death. If this little story will induce our young readers to appreciate the beauty of early piety, and to cultivate it in their hearts, we shall feel that it has not been written in vain. We have endeavored to show that, although duplicity and falsehood may seem to prosper, its fruit is bitterness; whilst the practice of virtue brings pleasantness and peace.

THE END.

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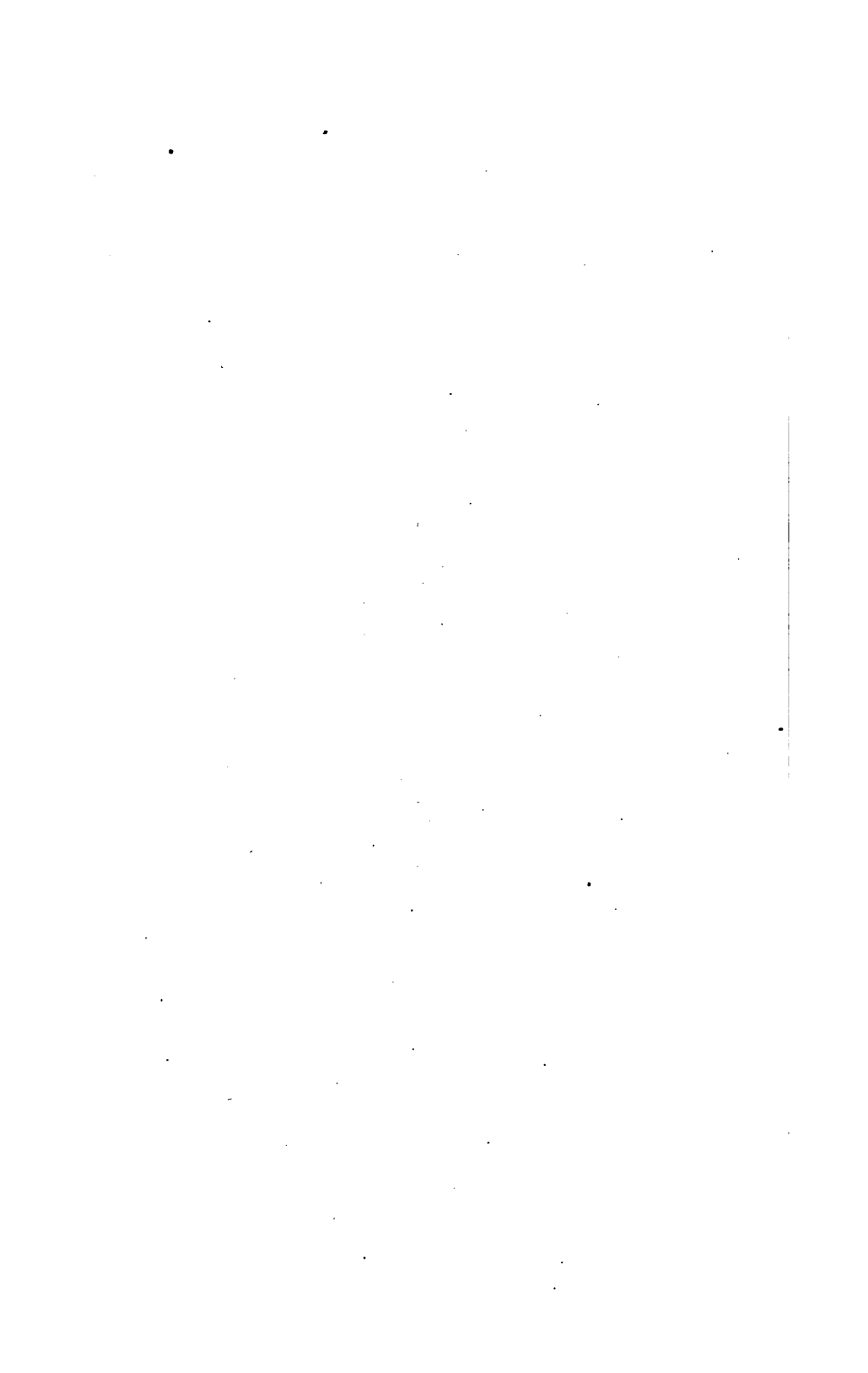
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